Commentary

VOLUME NINETY-ONE • NUMBER ONE • JANUARY 1991

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Norman Podhoretz

The Question of Black Leadership
Arch Puddington

Patrick J. Buchanan and the Jews
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The Wave of the Past
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For Paul Applebaum, Sincerely—A Story
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An Address to the Class of 1994
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David Brock

Books in Review: Steven T. Katz / Daniel Pipes / Richard Brookhiser / Roger Kaplan / Edward Norden / Sam Tanenhaus

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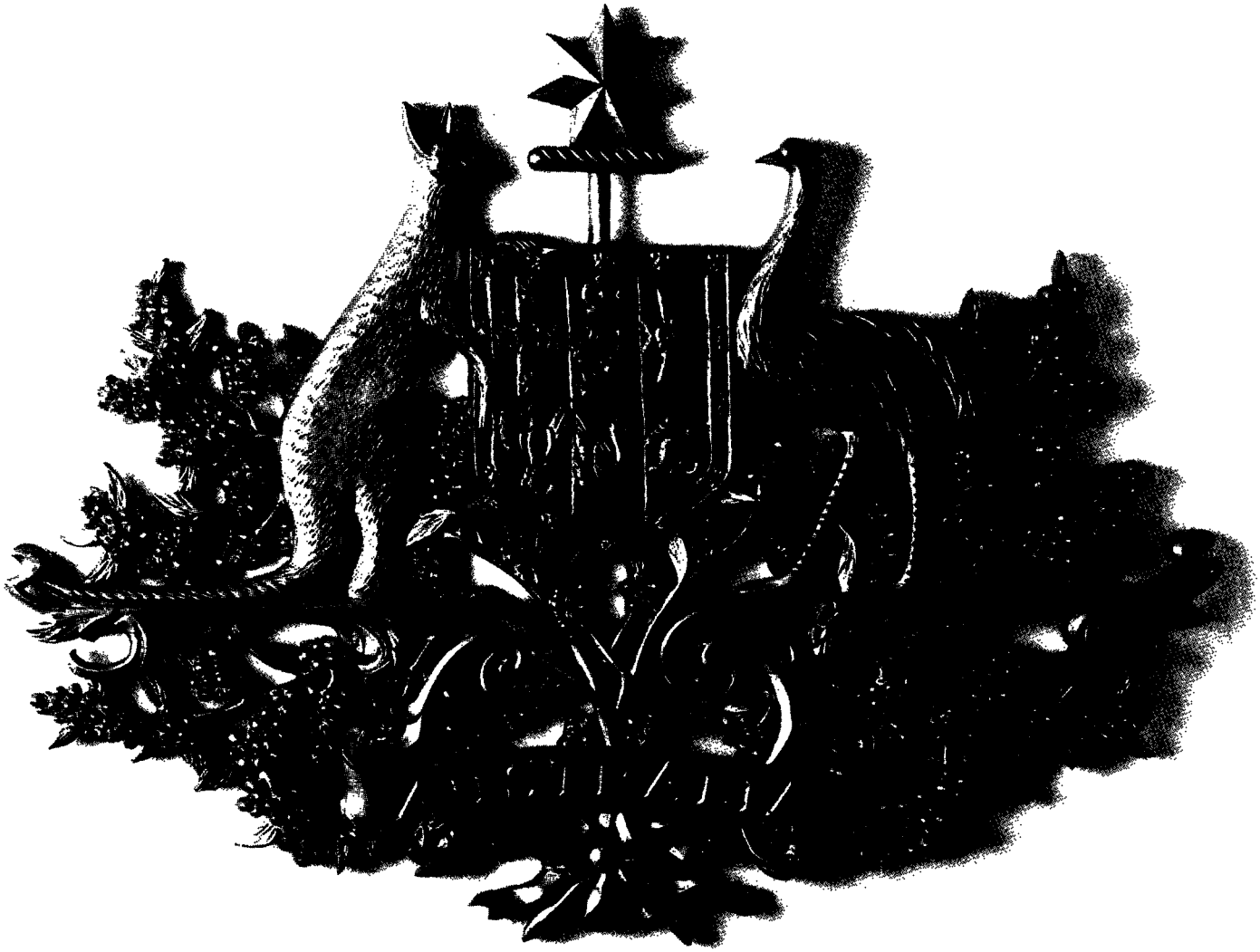

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Letters from Readers

"Western Civ"

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his article, "Western Civ—and Me" [August 1990], Allan Bloom takes undisguised glee in sniping at various universities such as Harvard, Duke, and Stanford whose current curricula and general ideological direction he finds unacceptable. Some of his comments about Stanford, the university I know best, are simply one-liners tossed in as rhetorical excess, as in "Join Stanford and see the world," a comment which is a complete non sequitur to his argument at that point about Japanese culture's ethnocentrism, but others are more serious.

At the end of his article, for example, he goes so far as to claim that in changing its curriculum, "Stanford has replaced John Locke, *the* philosopher of liberalism [his emphasis], with Frantz Fanon, an ephemeral writer once promoted by Jean-Paul Sartre. . . ." This cleverly sets up Bloom's ironic finale, comparing the devotion of the Chinese students of Tiananmen Square to Western ideals with the actions of the best U.S. universities in dismissing these ideals from the curriculum. The claim, however, is factually false.

The Western Culture program was inaugurated at Stanford in 1980. At first, it did not have a prescribed list of "core readings." A year later, a list was adopted with both a "required" and a "recommended" section. The required list included fifteen books and authors such as the Bible, Plato, Homer, Dante, Machiavelli, Galileo, Marx, and Freud. The recommended list included Locke, along with eighteen other authors. It is a list with which I think Mr. Bloom would generally feel quite at home. At no time during the following nine years was this list ever enforced on the eight different courses that satisfied the Western Culture requirement, but most of the courses tended to teach most of the books (but not all of them by any means) on the required list and some of the ones on the recommended list. Given the somewhat different disciplinary emphases of the courses (several emphasized literature, another science and technology), it is unlikely that Locke was taught in more than four of them in any given year.

So Locke was never "replaced" for the simple reason that he was never required in the first place. In fact, as Mr. Bloom can see for himself from the reading lists I sent him to examine, Locke is still read in four of the largest courses offered. It is safe to say that at least two-thirds of Stanford's 1,600 innocent freshmen are exposed to his writings. Frantz Fanon, the "Great Satan" of those like Mr. Bloom who would like to protect our young from evil ideas, is only read in two of these courses, which, as it happens, have the two smallest enrollments. No more than 10 percent of the freshmen are exposed to his dangerous thoughts. Actually, Fanon was read in just as many courses as an optional reading before the recent change in the curriculum. In other words, in contrast to Mr. Bloom's shrieks of alarm at the collapse of "Western Civ" at Stanford, not much has changed over the last decade. Of course, he may now prefer to believe that the rot set in much earlier than he had previously believed, or he may simply want to do his homework next time before pontificating about something he doesn't know very much about.

In fact, this past year, all eight Western Culture courses at Stanford read the Bible, Aristotle, Shakespeare, Marx, and Freud. Seven of the eight read St. Augustine, Virginia Woolf, and Rousseau. Six read Descartes, Machiavelli, Aquinas, and Plato. This is hardly evidence of the decline of the West, is it? It is one of the occupational pleasures of university faculty to carp at one another's reading lists, and I am sure that Mr. Bloom will readily find fault with the ones I sent him, but I hope he will pause, just for a moment, to consider how little has changed fundamentally despite all the heated political rhetoric that has surrounded the debate on the Western Culture requirements at Stanford.

In his zeal for scoring debating points, Mr. Bloom has succumbed to the temptation of the sophists he claims to despise to win a point with a clever jibe, and in the process he has, sadly, lost sight of his obligation to get his facts straight. Reality is always more complex than we would like it to be. Surely, this is one of the lessons that Mr.

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Bloom's idol Socrates taught us. To paraphrase the last sentence of his article, a scholar of Plato owes us much better.

JONATHAN P. REIDER
Associate Director of Admissions
Stanford University
Stanford, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I read with both interest and apprehension Allan Bloom's "Western Civ—and Me." If the best schools are as bad as he says they are, could Mr. Bloom draw up a list of schools where one *can* get a real education? I realize that such a list would only make him new enemies, but then he has so many enemies already that a few more wouldn't hurt, and such a list would probably also make him a good many very grateful friends. If my own experience is in any way typical, I can't tell you how many younger people there are out here who are getting a little worried about their chances of getting any kind of meaningful undergraduate education.

MARK GRAY
Seattle, Washington

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In "Western Civ—and Me" Allan Bloom responds to "the celebrated liberal," Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., who had contrasted Mr. Bloom's "alleged absolutism" with the authentic relativism of the American tradition. Mr. Bloom is astonished and astounded (as am I) that Schlesinger had cited, in support of this opinion, the assertion in the Declaration of Independence that "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights. . . ." I understand Mr. Bloom to imply—what is certainly true—that the tradition of moral and political postulates embodied in the Declaration of Independence is a non-relativist—that is to say, absolutist—tradition. In his reply to Schlesinger, however, Mr. Bloom proceeds as follows:

> I never stated, nor do I believe, that man is, *or can be*, in possession of absolutes. I tried to teach, evidently not very successfully in his case, that there are two threats to reason, the opinion that one knows the truth about the most important things and the opinion that there is no truth about them. [Emphasis added]

I find what Mr. Bloom says here to be puzzling, since he also writes—and this, it seems to me, lies at the very heart of his (and my) argument for Western civilization—that

> Socrates' way of life is the consequence of his recognition that we can know what it is that we do not know about the most important things and that we are by nature obliged to seek that knowledge. We must remain faithful to the bit of light which pierces through our circumambient darkness.

If we have the authority of Socrates that we *can know* what we need to know "about the most important things," then why cannot the truths of the Declaration of Independence be among them? Why may not these truths be among the fruits, after more than 2,000 years, of that Socratic quest? Why may we not believe this to be "the bit of light that pierces . . . our circumambient darkness"?

HARRY V. JAFFA
Claremont, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Nietzsche challenges us to suppose that truth were unbearable, and to possess it were a curse, robbing us of all appetite for life. . . . Then what? Would we choose illusion? . . . Why do some men push on, seeking truth? Nietzsche's answer is "the will to power," the need to test one's strength, to overcome oneself, to perform feats of valor. That is what Nietzsche primarily means in the dictum quoted by Allan Bloom: "Philosphy is the most spiritualized will to power."

Mr. Bloom does Nietzsche a deep wrong by the misleading way in which he uses the quotation. But more than this; by failing to understand the issue Nietzsche raised, he persists in a somewhat sentimental view of liberal education. He says, in effect, come, bright young men and women, become liberally educated, it will do you good, and finally, it will do the world good, too. That is a happy thought, and perhaps it is true. But perhaps not—perhaps liberal education, if sincerely pursued, is altogether more dangerous and troubling.

On the other hand, suppose we are determined that liberal education shall do good. Then are we not in danger of manufacturing untruths, half-truths, beliefs plausible or implausible, and calling them truth? Further, Nietzsche sometimes asks, is it not perhaps fair that philosophy shall serve life? But if so, let us make the activity explicit, and judge philosophies according to whether they are more or less life-enhancing. Even then, some of our "truths" will need to be bracing, for life requires strength to flourish. . . .

Interestingly, Mr. Bloom's position is akin to Nietzsche's, so far as I can tell, with two exceptions: (1) He never truly entertains the possibility that truth and life may be at odds; and (2) he wishes to deny that the predetermination that elite education shall "best nourish the hunger of young souls" subordinates truth to utility, and the sincere quest for truth to an approximation aimed at edification. Yet the pretense to the disinterested pursuit of truth undermines the very argument for elite education. No one really believes that liberal education, particularly as represented in the humanities, is disinterested, not even Mr. Bloom. But since his whole case is based on the opposition between the quest for truth and ideological motivation, it is bound to fail. The game is given away when he raises the question of Heidegger's Nazism, as if it were appropriate to judge the truth of ideas by their possible consequences, or when he says, "the people of the world need and want education in democracy," thus prejudicing the result of inquiry.

The argument for elite education runs along these lines: that those of greater intelligence and spiritedness will have contempt for obvious twaddle, and will seek to engage issues of consequence more decisively. They will be contemptuous of teachers who do not serve them in this search, and respectful, even grateful, to those such as Mr. Bloom who do. And though their search may only terminate in superior forms of belief, and though their beliefs may differ, they will have justified the elaborate apparatus of liberal education in a way that other students cannot, to whom philosophy and literature and art mean very little, and for whom it is useless to provide the pretense of inquiry if simple indoctrination is intended. Many who oppose Mr. Bloom intend to leech out whatever meaning there is in the enterprise of liberal education, and if they had greater integrity would get out and leave it to those of us to whom it matters.

But we must not use the issue of

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the integrity of the curriculum as a stalking horse for philosophical positions upon which there is no wide agreement. We must define the issue more narrowly. If liberal education means anything, then, as Mr. Bloom says, "the true canon aggregates around the most urgent questions we face. That is the only ground for the study of books." Perhaps "the only ground" is overstated, but still, it is the strongest ground for a form of education founded upon discussion, argument, reflection, research—in general, inquiry.

MICHAEL DAVID BLUME
Annapolis, Maryland

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I give generally heartfelt assent to what Allan Bloom says in "Western Civ—and Me." . . . In my own little corner of the academic world, too, I see the politicization of core revision and the corruption of affirmative action. They are indeed connected with the absurd egalitarianism and the naive or doctrinaire relativism that Mr. Bloom diagnoses so well. However, I have a few quibbles about the risks of using certain words as fighting slogans.

The term "relativism" admits of degrees and equivocations. There is a relativism (as Socrates saw) in the play of young minds, in the ability to debate either side of an issue, in the appreciation and enjoyment of arguments that are not one's own.

A more mature and "undoctrinaire" relativism conjoins seriousness to playfulness. Such a relativism moves in on itself, perceives ironies, and gains a tragic awareness that logic cannot avoid or resolve life's paradoxes. It transforms into something unlike itself. "Relativism," in brief, is no longer a viable fighting term, and there is not much point in arguing with Arthur Schlesinger or anyone else about it. . . .

I dislike, as much as Mr. Bloom does, the Nazism of Martin Heidegger and Paul de Man. . . . However, they are now dead, not clear and present dangers. . . . Their words overall, earlier and later, ought not to be dismissed out of hand because of some of the politically dreadful linkages.

There may be, as Mr. Bloom says, "the possible relation of Heidegger's or de Man's thought to the foulest political extremism." But connections with the politically nefarious can be found in many worthy thinkers, including Hobbes, Machiavelli, Nietzsche, Santayana, and even Plato. Explore the connections, raise suspicions, but let us not use simple litmus tests to launch people into or out of our canons. . . .

Mr. Bloom writes that "[E]verywhere in the Communist world what is wanted is rational liberal democracy." Does he mean *desired* or *needed*? What is desired, alas, is also illiberal, irrational, passionate religious autocracy—which sentiments can generously be attributed, with great egalitarianism, to both Western and non-Western sources, perhaps even to the human condition. The study of such irrationality should be made part of every coherent and rational core. . . .

Mr. Bloom seems unequivocally enthusiastic about science, "that big rock of transcendental knowledge or truth." He begins his article with a discussion of irony, and I would like to attribute irony to him here. For philosophy, which has been capable both of allying with science and challenging it, has shown that the big rock is more like a rolling stone, gathering accretions and modifications, serving some human powers and purposes but not others. Science, alas, is not an anchor that can keep us from going adrift. The nearest thing to such a rock and anchor, of course, is philosophy. But even philosophy is in need of ongoing shoving and lifting, fated, it seems, to be mired and unmired in ever new forms of "historicism," "relativism," and "egalitarianism."

MORRIS GROSSMAN
Fairfield University
Fairfield, Connecticut

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Allan Bloom ignores the whole question of why the multiculturalists have been so successful in intruding their world view and propaganda into the elite university curriculum. A major reason is that Western historiography . . . has traditionally lied by portraying the development of modern Western civilization as a natural continuation of Greco-Roman (and maybe ancient Hebrew) society. This patently incorrect view may simply be an attempt to simplify a vastly complex subject, but the intellectual degradation caused by a little lie prepares the intellectual environment for the corruption of the big lie of the multiculturalists. . . .

The view of continuity enthusiasts has probably led to a profound misunderstanding of how pre-modern societies develop and is grossly insulting to those of us of non-Western background in that it suggests that the success of the West was programmed into it from the earliest period and that the West, therefore, had something which other civilizations lacked. Actually, the pre-modern West has far more in common with pre-modern China and Japan than it does with the modern West. For example, Roman emperors were often accorded divine status just like Chinese and Japanese emperors. . . .

Most educated people probably have a conscious, or nearly conscious, sense of the lateral similarity of all pre-modern societies, including those of the classical West. This shared sense of similarity makes it easy for the multiculturalists to market their cultural relativism, since they argue that there is no value system which distinguishes one society from another. But then traditional Western historiography clinches the multiculturalist argument by insisting on the continuity of Western culture from the ancient to the modern West. At this point, Mr. Bloom and his allies might as well capitulate because this traditional historiography, at least as taught in the secondary schools and universities, has provided the multiculturalists with all the evidence they need to claim that there is no reason except perhaps Eurocentric chauvinism to emphasize modern Western culture over any other culture.

As an antidote to this rather disastrous situation, I would propose that elite education recognize and teach the lateral similarity of pre-modern civilizations, all of which divided the world into self and barbarian. . . . The main foundation upon which modern civilization is built was laid in the 17th and 18th centuries. . . . A properly designed curriculum would emphasize the achievement of our immediate intellectual forebears of the Enlightenment and guarantee that a well-educated college student would immediately identify the hypocrisy of Islamic, African, and Asian demagogues who complain of Western imperialism. Such a student would be knowledgeable enough to compare the history of modern Western involvement in the pre-modern world with the horrible atrocities which pre-modern Western and non-Western adventurers and im-

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perialists committed in the premodern world. In effect, a good elite curriculum cleansed of the traditional lie of Western cultural continuity would neutralize the multiculturalists by providing a *genuine* and sophisticated multicultural education.

JOACHIM MARTILLO
Cambridge, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I enjoyed and agreed with much that Allan Bloom says about teaching Western culture, but I continue to wish for someone of greater knowledge and importance than myself to rediscover what I consider the greatest achievement of Western culture, . . . namely, the great founding ideas of the American colonists. I know that the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution are on the Great Books lists and in many a college syllabus but everyone seems to assume prior knowledge, and passes quickly over them. Yet these documents—with their provision for the separation of powers, for an independent judiciary, and for the doctrine that the rights of every individual are more important than the rights of the government—represent the second great ethical and political revolution of Western civilization (Moses came first).

GERSON JACOBS
San Francisco, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . The role of the university in our educational system has undergone many changes. In the late 50's, with the advent of Sputnik, universities were sold to the public as a major pillar of national security. Later, the university came to be defined as the place where a lifetime income could be made to increase by several hundred thousand dollars. Finally, during the Vietnam era, our universities and churches became the last refuge of the draft dodger, finally serving a clientele desirous of the longest possible term of idleness. It was at that point that American universities began to share the political role of universities in Europe and Latin America, as places for the cultivation of knowledge by people unrestrained by the possibility of having to live with the consequences of that knowledge.

The result of this confusion between the philosophical and the vocational role of the university has been the emergence of a "*lumpen* intelligentsia," unholy in every sense of the word. . . . Up until now, our educational system, in its inimitably American way, had attempted to find a party favor for everyone: you are not smart enough to get a Ph.D. in physics or mathematics? Never mind, you can get a Ph.D. in journalism or education or basket weaving. You can't read books? No matter, we'll show it to you on videotape. You don't understand Nietzsche? No matter, you can buy Superman comic books. In the hands of the Left, however, a doctorate has now come to be another entitlement, a part of the birthright of every American, another civil right which it would be unconscionable to deny on such flimsy grounds as lack of ability or unwillingness to do the work.

Thus, while I admire Mr. Bloom and his writing immensely and agree with the need for internalizing the books that are our heritage, I do so as a fellow elitist who is not convinced that this knowledge is needed by all. . . . It is certainly necessary to provide everyone with a skill, but I greatly question whether it is necessary to provide everyone with the illusion that he has been educated. . . . Perhaps there was, after all, some wisdom in Chairman Mao's insistence on sending intellectuals to the farm. For all the repugnant brutality of the Cultural Revolution, the thought of bringing Duke University intellectuals and their colleagues into such intimate contact with reality does have a certain appeal. . . .

WALTER SCHIMMERLING
Arlington, Virginia

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I would like to thank you for publishing Allan Bloom's incisive article, "Western Civ—and Me." It seems rather odd that Marxism as an ideology should continue to dominate the humanities departments of our major colleges and universities at a time when the peoples of Europe, the USSR, and China are rejecting it. I find the left-wing attack upon our treasured intellectual heritage appalling. . . .

When the Chinese students needed a symbol for their cause, they turned not toward the Third World but to us, and found their symbol in the Statue of Liberty; does the West, then, have nothing to offer them intellectually but Marxist revisionism? . . .

Students need intellectual discipline and an understanding of our heritage. To reject that heritage in the name of a discredited leftist agenda is an absurdity. Instead of logic, science, and art, will we go on offering our students the typical multicultural, environmentalist, feminist, liberal slogans that already inundate them through the media? Many young people are barely literate; are they to be further discouraged from the pursuit of knowledge by the professors and administrators who are busily at work deconstructing our Western Civ classes? Will we advise our students to look for their ideals in the Third World, where terrorism, dictatorship, and tribalism currently thrive? Will we replace Plato's *Republic* with Malcolm X's *Autobiography* in our political-science classes? I hope not. We need more thinkers like Allan Bloom to lead us out of this "postmodern" crisis. Otherwise Marx may have the last laugh after all.

PAUL SILVERMAN
Spring Valley, New York

ALLAN BLOOM writes:

Jonathan P. Reider is one of the many voices of Stanford. To understand that voice we must look to its source and the audience it is attempting to influence. He speaks for the admissions office. If rumor be truth, there has been a substantial decrease in applications for admission since the scandal over the curriculum reform three years ago. Mark Gray's letter is typical of the concern of many potential applicants.

To such potential applicants Mr. Reider says, What changes? Nothing happened here. We just did the most banal scholarly fine-tuning of our text selection. This claim is too disingenuous even to merit discussion. The substance and the tenor of the Stanford debate are too well known and too well documented to permit such evasion. Everyone knows that the white, Western male hegemony in the curriculum was overthrown there. This famous victory was celebrated by Stanford functionaries. We all heard them, and we are all aware of Stanford's reforming mission.

I learned of Locke's being deposed from a letter to the *Wall Street Journal* (January 6, 1989), from Charles Junkerman, then Stanford's assistant dean of undergraduate studies:

> . . . 50 years ago John Locke seemed indispensable in answering a ques-

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tion like "What is social justice?" In 1989, with a more interdependent world order, a more heterogeneous domestic population, and mass media and communications systems that complicate our definitions of "society" and "individual," it may be that someone like Frantz Fanon, a black Algerian psychoanalyst, will get us closer to the answer we need.

The core list of classic readings, in which Locke was "strongly recommended" to all parts of the liberal-arts program, disappeared. He is present in some of the lists for particular parts of the new CIV (Cultures, Ideas, Values) program, but as one among countless books, too many for students to read with any care. These lists are interesting documents, packed with books from here, there, and everywhere, from which all presumptions of the greatness of the works have disappeared. They are not invitations to the quest for truth. Rather, they present vile bodies for the race, class, and gender analysis mandated in the CIV legislation. It must be borne in mind that the character of a program is determined not only by what books are on its lists but by how they are treated.

Mr. Reider provides a fair sample of Stanford rhetoric. He says that I think Fanon is a "Great Satan," that I wish to "protect the young from evil ideas," etc. He thus associates me with Khomeini-like (non-Western?) conspiracies to inhibit free speech. But I said no such thing. I used the word "ephemeral," which means a thing of a day, passing. I have no more objection to students reading Fanon than I do to their reading *Time* or *Playboy*. I do object to their confusing these things with serious thought, and this is what the Stanford program is systematically promoting. Fanon is not a theoretically dangerous writer but a conventional one. If students want to learn what a truly radical thinker is, they must study Locke and his peers.

Finally, I wonder whether Mr. Reider knows what a non sequitur is.

Michael David Blume faces the abyss smugly. He is right that philosophy should not be edifying. But it is utterly un-Nietzschean of him to wish for silence about the extreme consequences of some kinds of thought. Nietzsche constantly tests his readers' resoluteness with calls for slavery, whips to deal with women, the joy of the knife, and unjust wars. Most readers don't have the stomach for it. Mr. Blume's liberal education is too unpolitical to prepare students to confront the human condition. Inquire indeed, but know the risks of inquiry! Ignorance of this is what I reproach contemporary Nietzscheans for.

Harry V. Jaffa remains within the confines of the relativism-absolutism dichotomy which makes it impossible to philosophize.

Mark Gray's is my favorite letter for its candor and simplicity. He is right that a few enemies more or less won't do me any harm, and I would be glad to win his friendship. Unfortunately, I cannot provide him with a list of the colleges and universities which care for students' souls because I don't have one myself.

I can mention two examples, which, among others, seem to me relatively good. Carleton College is a traditional liberal-arts school which has produced a disproportionate number of my best graduate students. This appears to be due to the fact that it has maintained genuine diversity, i.e., diversity of opinion. Its students are frequently free of the ideological certitudes of the day and know there are various serious responses to our great problems. Carleton is equidistant from the great centers of enthusiasm on the East and West Coasts.

The other is St. John's College which plods along, without apologies, in its Great Books program even now when we think we know that they are the source of unjust domination. This means that its students have a naive acquaintance with such books and can, at least potentially, address the problems of their own lives through them.

To Mark Gray I would say, you must not despair. It is true that almost no institutions are dedicated to preparing students to address the permanent alternatives and that a very great number are dedicated to a reforming mission which celebrates its own superiority to all earlier views. But usually there are a few serious professors who are not caught up in the tide. With their teaching and the association with a few like-minded friends, you can weather it. A good education is today more a question of chance than it was in the past when there was more agreement about our heritage and institutions. There are, however, still bargains to be found in what has become the university bazaar. I would suggest that you and your friends be especially wary of those institutions which trumpet their consciousness-transforming vocation. Stay with those places that might still limit themselves to providing the materials for self-discovery.

I am grateful for the other letters, but they raise issues that cannot properly be addressed within the confines of a response such as this. Together they represent the kind of discussion I would hope to provoke.

Mandela's Record

To the Editor of Commentary:

In "Mandela in America" [October 1990] Joshua Muravchik raises important questions about the apparent discrepancy between Nelson Mandela's demand that the international community condemn the policies of South Africa and his refusal to condemn the policies of Arafat, Qaddafi, and Castro.

Mr. Muravchik might also have mentioned the discrepancy between Mandela's criticism of Israel for allegedly violating the United Nations embargo on South Africa, and his total silence with regard to the Arab and Islamic regimes which supply oil to South Africa in flagrant violation of the UN embargo.

According to the Amsterdam-based Shipping Research Bureau, which monitors foreign oil shipments to South Africa, Arab and Islamic countries are the main suppliers of petroleum to the apartheid regime. Between January 1979 and August 1987, the Bureau was able to track 343 oil shipments that South Africa received from around the world. Arab and Islamic countries were responsible for 294 of the 343 shipments.

In other words, the Arab and Islamic regimes provided more than 85 percent of those Pretoria-bound oil tankers. Saudi Arabia was the leading supplier, with 76 shipments, followed by Islamic Brunei (57 shipments), the United Arab Emirates (53 shipments), Oman (51), Iran (36), and Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain (21 shipments among them). There have also been shipments of oil to South Africa from Egypt, Iraq, and South Yemen. The former Norwegian Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Torbjorn Froysnes, has estimated that "95 percent of the oil supplied to South Africa comes from Arab

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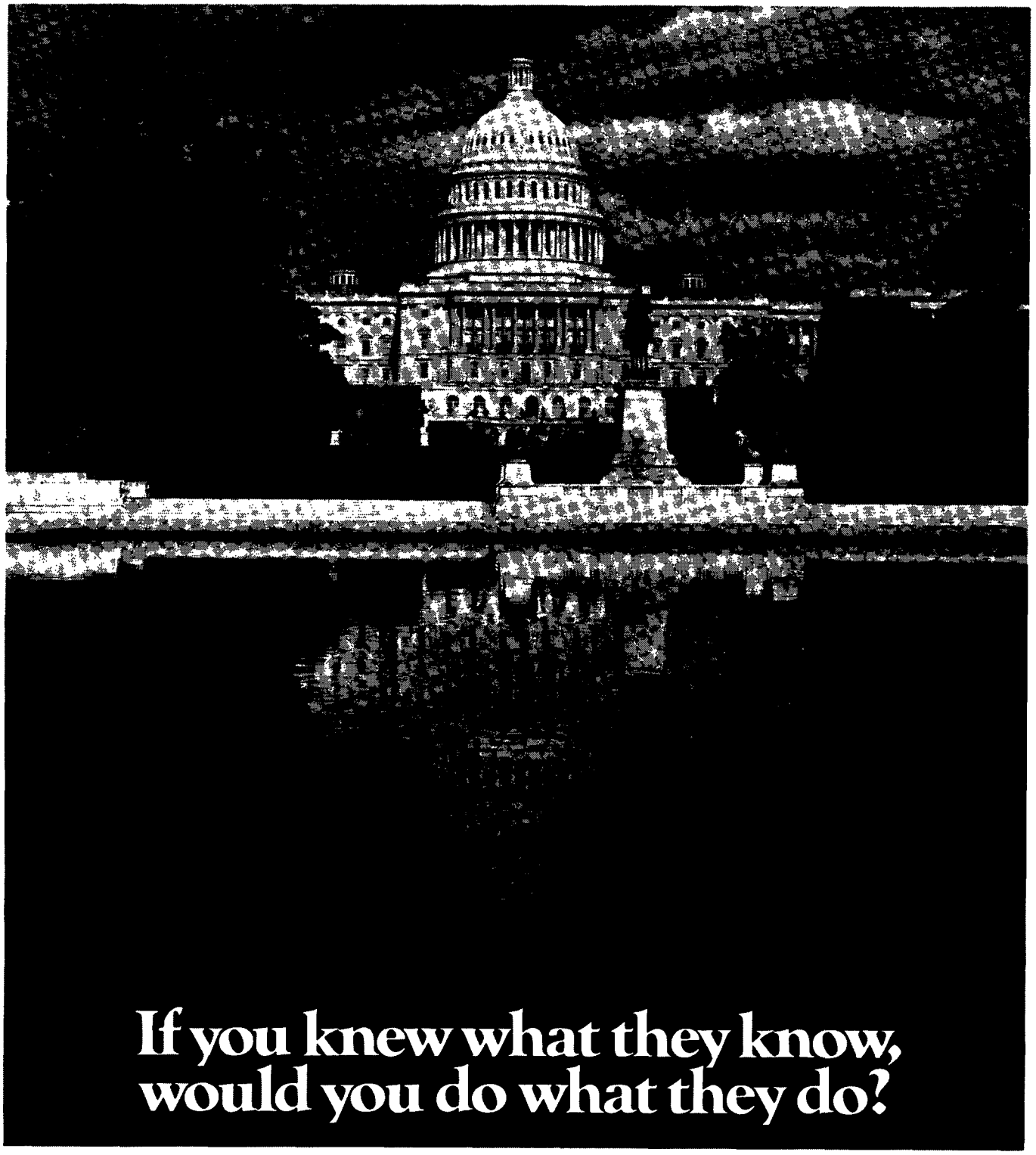

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states on the Persian Gulf—one-half of this in direct shipments." Determining the exact percentage is tricky, because substantial quantities of Arab oil reach Pretoria through indirect routes.

Indeed, much of the oil trafficking between the Arab world and South Africa is accomplished through subterfuge. As Arthur Jay Klinghoffer documents in his fascinating new study, *Oiling the Wheels of Apartheid: Exposing South Africa's Secret Oil Trade* (Lynne Rienner Publishers, Colorado), many Arab oil tankers destined for South Africa actually change their names at sea—and in some cases even transfer their cargos to other ships in transit—in order to avoid detection. The unloading of Arab oil in Cape Town and Durban is never officially recorded. Sometimes the tankers are even scrapped altogether after completing their mission. In other cases, most of the oil is covertly unloaded, the ship is sunk, and appropriate insurance claims are filed for the "damaged" vessel.

The Arab role in supplying oil to Pretoria was confirmed in 1987 by a United Nations study, which found that the Arab states, including Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Oman, and the United Arab Emirates, had committed "frequent and regrettable violations" of the UN's embargo on petroleum shipments to South Africa. These are the same Arab nations whose representatives, from the podium of United Nations headquarters in New York, regularly denounce South Africa and pledge their allegiance to the UN oil embargo against Pretoria.

Nelson Mandela's silence about South Africa's Arab connection is troubling, to say the least.

BERTRAM KORN, JR.
Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting in America
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I fear that even Joshua Muravchik's lucid account of "Mandela in America" has underestimated the degree to which . . . Nelson Mandela has dissembled the doctrinaire third-worldist ideology of his movement for the benefit of an American public conditioned to regard him as the African equivalent of Lech Walesa. Mandela was especially mendacious in responding to two issues in particular—the ANC's attitude toward Israel and Zionism, and the importance it has long assigned to the triumph of "the socialist system" in South Africa and throughout the world.

. . . The American Jewish delegation that met with Mandela in Geneva emerged from its encounter, "with no doubt in our minds," in the words of Abraham Foxman of the Anti-Defamation League, "about [Mandela's] recognition of the fundamental legitimacy of the Zionist endeavor and the right of the Jewish people to a state in the Middle East." And a few days later, in his prime-time television appearance of June 21, 1990, Mandela reassured Americans that "although we identify with the PLO because, like ourselves, they are fighting for the right of self-determination . . ., that does not mean that the ANC has ever doubted the right of Israel to exist as a state, legally, within secure [1967] borders."

Yet these assurances are contradicted . . . not only by some of Mandela's own previous remarks, which Mr. Muravchik cites in his article, but also to a much greater degree by many ANC pronouncements on the subject of Zionism. . . .

For example, in his 1986 address to the Nonaligned Summit, ANC President Oliver Tambo declared that "Zionism and apartheid are but two sides of the same coin, which we pledge to fight, side by side with the PLO, the Arab people, and the rest of progressive humanity." In the same speech, Tambo, who is Mandela's closest friend and political associate, also proclaimed that "we recognize Zionism for what it is, a racist doctrine and practice." He then proceeded to enumerate a long list of crimes against the Palestinian and Arab peoples of which Zionism had been guilty.

Of course the security of Israel is unlikely to be severely damaged by the emergence of yet another third-worldist regime in Africa that would rejoice in its destruction, but the ANC's equation of Zionism with racism has especially ominous implications for South African Jews, most of whom are guilty of Zionism, given the ANC's frequently repeated promise (which Mandela himself repeated while in the U.S.) to make all manifestations of racism "a punishable crime."

In that same television appearance, Mandela was asked whether "your economy will be based on the Marxist system, socialism, or capitalism.". . . He replied by pretending agnosticism on that issue on behalf of the ANC: "We are not concerned with models. We are not concerned with labels. We are practical men and women. . . ." But in fact, the socialist and capitalist labels have long been indispensable features of ANC rhetoric, and the ANC leadership has employed them in the most partisan fashion imaginable on innumerable occasions.

For example, the ANC's manifesto, *Strategy and Tactics*—a pamphlet which ranks second only to the Freedom Charter among ANC documents—begins with the assertion that "the struggle of the oppressed people of South Africa is taking place within an international context of transition to the socialist system." . . . And there have been hundreds of other such declarations which leave no doubt as to where the ANC has stood for the last three decades in what Tambo has called (in his 1977 address to the Angolan MPLA Congress) "the confrontation between the liberating theory and practice of socialism and the oppressive, exploitative, and anti-human system of capitalism."

As a self-styled "loyal and dedicated member of the ANC . . . in full agreement with all of its objectives, strategies, and tactics," Mandela is entirely aware of all this, and his misrepresentation of ANC ideology and positions is necessarily a matter of deliberate and calculated falsehood. Even so, his remarks might be taken as evidence of some evolution in his personal views, were they not contradicted by a number of recent statements indicating that Mandela himself still attaches enormous importance to the two sets of "models" and "labels" toward which he affects indifference.

Shortly before embarking for America, Mandela assured the editors of *Der Spiegel* that "the masses in Africa will have nothing to do with capitalism" and that this was especially true for "us in South Africa" where "the union of racial oppression and capitalism is responsible for our current plight." He predicted that in the greater part of Africa "there will be socialism from now on, despite the events in Europe," as "we in Africa will develop our own path to socialism." And if "you gauge the

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future of socialism in Africa by the events in Europe," warned Mandela, "you are making a big mistake."

Mandela is not discouraged by the political and economic failure of collectivist regimes in Africa. As he explained in a June 2, 1990 news conference, "If there are any economic problems in Africa today, the responsibility for such 'mess,' as you call it, must be laid squarely on the shoulders of the former colonial powers." And if Mandela remains a partisan of African socialism in general, he seems to admire particularly the putative accomplishments of his old friend Julius Nyerere in "building a progressive Tanzania in which all of its people were invited to participate." Never mind that Nyerere has erected a single-party, collectivist dictatorship, maintained by an army of party spies, or that he dragooned 80 percent of the peasantry into cooperative villages, telling them the exact dwelling in which they had to live and making sure that they stayed there, or that his economic policies have consumed $10 billion in foreign aid (in the name of "self-reliance") over the last twenty years, while effecting a 43-percent reduction in personal consumption. . . .

Some of Mandela's American apologists . . . take refuge in the presumption that he must have drawn the appropriate conclusions from the collapse of "the powerful socialist system" in Eastern Europe, but he has in fact on several occasions denied that this event establishes the superioritiy of the West. "We can't be over-worried about this matter, as the West is," is what he told the Johannesburg *Star*. In praising the "courage and honesty" of Gorbachev for admitting "that there are great shortcomings in socialist [*sic*] system," Mandela seems to reject the deeper criticisms offered in the pages of the Soviet press. Moreover, Mandela complains that "there is no comparable leader in the West who has made a similar confession [to Gorbachev's], who has said: 'We made a mistake by colonizing the world and oppressing through imperialism the masses of the people throughout the globe.'" . . .

Finally, there is evidence that Mandela even shares the conspiracy explanation for the collapse of European Communism favored by Robert Mugabe and other African Marxists. In a recent extemporaneous speech before a session of the Organization of African Unity, Mandela urged the unity of the "national-liberation movement" in South Africa in order to avoid the fate of certain "other countries where faceless elements have destabilized those countries, their political system, their economic organization. . . ." Mandela warned that "there is no country which faces as much danger in this regard as South Africa." At the very least this reveals a certain alarming capacity for ideologically based xenophobia. . . .

Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of Mandela's American tour is that he managed to conceal much of his hostility to America and the West while being acclaimed by the likes of Flora Lewis for his "remarkable candor."

DAVID ROBERTS, JR.
Houston, Texas

Songwriters

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In selecting the best American songwriter, William G. Hyland ["The Best Songwriter of Them All," October 1990] diplomatically does not name all of the ten or twelve candidates, so one cannot fault him for ignoring Hank Williams, Sr. But since he starts chronologically with Victor Herbert, he clearly has omitted the one name that belongs at the head of the list—Stephen Foster.

Foster really was born on the Fourth of July, and not only that, but the Fourth of July 1826, the 50th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence and the day on which both John Adams and Thomas Jefferson died. Foster died in New York City in 1864, but his influence persists to this day, as acknowledged, for instance, by Hugh Moffatt, no slouch of a songwriter himself, who includes a stirring a-capella rendition of "Hard Times Come Again No More" on his Rounder Records album, *Troubadour*.

JAMES RING ADAMS
Weston, Connecticut

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Thanks so much for the . . . tribute by William G. Hyland to Irving Berlin, whom he calls "The Best Songwriter of Them All." . . . Berlin gave any life, every life, a lift. We needed no other stimulant than a Berlin song. How lucky we were to have known him, how unlucky are those who must reach for something artificial now that he's gone. But the world's sorrow is diminished just a little bit by knowing that heaven is probably inspiring another song from Irving Berlin.

GEORGE ALBERT
St. Joseph, Missouri

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

William G. Hyland lists Harry Warren among those American songwriters coming out of the Russian-Jewish community. According to David Ewen's *American Songwriters*, however, Harry Warren was the Brooklyn-born son of Italian immigrants from Calabrese. Warren's father, Anthony Guaragna, anglicized the patronymic to "Warren" when he arrived in America in 1889. Had he not done so, Harry's full baptismal name would have been Harry (Enrico) Salvatore Guaragna.

GEORGE D. SANSEVERINO
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his quest for "The Best Songwriter of Them All," William G. Hyland cites Aaron Copland's elements of music—rhythm, melody, harmony, and tonal color—as criteria that make possible an objective determination of what is not in any sense measurable.

While allowing that melody is primary because popular songs are meant to be sung, Mr. Hyland then curiously neglects the central role of the lyricist in making a melody comprehensible to an audience. For instance, Hyland identifies "Ol' Man River" as Jerome Kern's most durable work. But certainly not according to any of Copland's criteria. A story has it that when an admirer approached Kern at a cocktail party and praised the piece, Oscar Hammerstein, who was standing nearby, wheeled around and interjected: "Kern didn't write 'Ol' Man River.' He wrote: da, da, da-da; *I* wrote 'Ol' Man River.'"

As for the best lyricist, the choice is clear and simple:

With Cole it was wit first,
then heart,
and that was pure Porter.

With Lorenz it was Hart
with wit
which is:
Art of a higher order.

SOL KAUFLER
Tarzana, California

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WILLIAM G. HYLAND writes:

James Ring Adams has noted my omission of Stephen Foster, who he believes should be at the head of my list of American songwriters. Mr. Adams may well be right, but I think Stephen Foster is in a unique category and my concentration was on the interwar period of 1914-45.

I, of course, agree with George Albert that Irving Berlin gave "every life a lift."

George D. Sanseverino and several others have noted my error in including Harry Warren among the songwriters coming out of the Russian-Jewish community. In fact, Mr. Warren was of Italian descent and was born in Brooklyn. Whatever his origins, he was a fine songwriter, and composer of *Forty-Second Street*, the musical and David Merrick production. Old-timers may remember that he also wrote "Chattanooga Choo Choo," and would certainly rank in my top ten.

Sol Kaufler makes an important point, namely, that it is difficult to separate the words from the music, and this is certainly true of "Ol' Man River," and even more so of "White Christmas," which I did mention in the article. I, too, have read the anecdote about "Ol' Man River," though I am only aware of a version in which the exchange occurred between Mrs. Kern and Mrs. Hammerstein at a luncheon.

On the other hand, I could not agree that the best lyricist would be Cole Porter or Lorenz Hart. My vote would be Ira Gershwin. But an appreciation of both the words and the music is highly subjective, and who could quarrel with the choice of either Porter or Hart?—but then there is Irving Berlin.

The Model Minority

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In addition to those other standout "model minorities" described by Louis Winnick ["America's 'Model Minority,'" August 1990], there should be mentioned a small but upwardly mobile minority that has already made its mark in the San Francisco Bay Area: the Palestinian Arabs. Coming mainly from Ramallah and Jerusalem, they have shown the same drive and family orientation characteristic of those groups praised by Mr. Winnick.

I do not agree with their political aims, but I do admire what they have done.

EMANUEL FRIEDMAN
Burlingame, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

If, as Louis Winnick shows us, Asian immigrants have progressed so quickly in American society, the obvious question is why American blacks, our major minority, have failed to do so, even with . . . a prodigious number of formal and informal compensatory programs.

Both groups have suffered past discrimination, but . . . while Asian families have been close, and have provided both emotional and material support to their members, the same has not been true, generally speaking, of black families. Black leaders have resisted discussion of this factor, and have gone along with and encouraged misbegotten welfare programs which have served further to induce family instability.

While Asian immigrants have used discrimination to help weld their determination to the opportunities available, blacks have been encouraged, by their "leaders" and

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by guilt-ridden white media spokesmen, university professors, and politicians, to blame their . . . misfortunes on their "stars" rather than upon themselves. . . .

There now appears to be some stirring in the black community and leadership toward self-help and away from blaming others. Unfortunately, however, the self-styled spokesmen in the universities, the media, and the halls of government—"the best and the brightest," and, as they never hesitate to tell us, the most caring—have not changed their tune one whit. Most of them live far from the problems about which they pontificate, but to them ideas are more important than people. . . .

It is fortunate that inner-directed Asian-Americans have escaped these "caring" hands and done it for themselves, in spite of all obstacles.

FREDERIC WILE

New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Louis Winnick's article, "America's 'Model Minority,'" was very exciting, showing how an industrious, self-denying, but also self-serving minority can progress in the wonderful ambience of America. However, I think the author's statement, "A blessing for them and a blessing for America," is rather strong medicine, perhaps a little overdrawn and premature.

I wish the new Asian immigrants all the luck they deserve, but I have qualms, especially about their lack of sympathy for the underdog, for other ethnic groups, for the downtrodden. Asian-Americans have not had much opportunity to show this feature of their character, but their initial venture into politics has not been very gratifying.

I am referring particularly to the successful efforts of the Japanese-American community to have a law passed granting $20,000 and an apology to all Japanese in the four Western states (the area designated a military zone during World War II) who were placed in relocation centers, though they had free passage anywhere else in the United States. This law suggests that we reacted to Japan racially rather than on grounds of military necessity. . . .

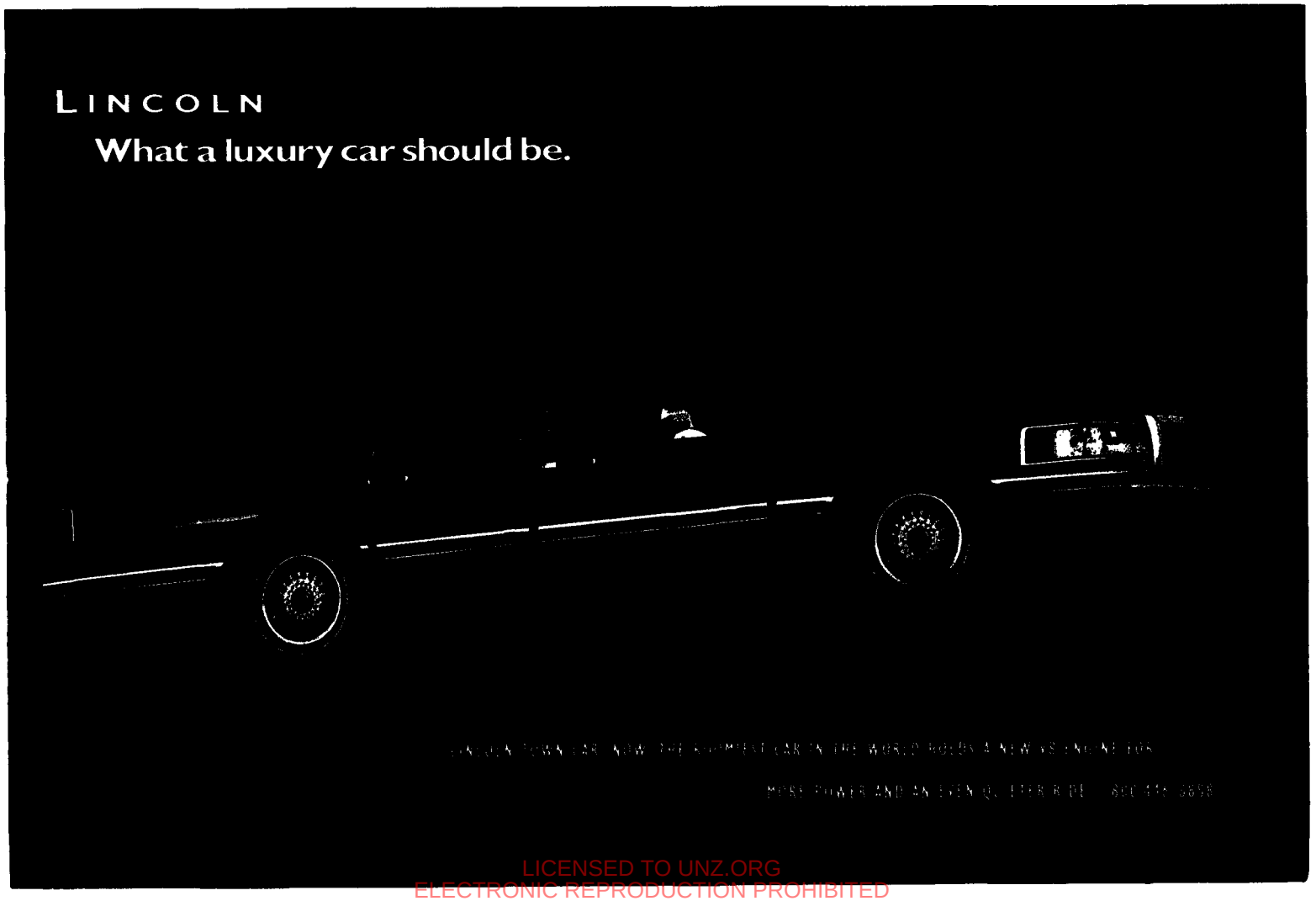
The Japanese enemy aliens were interned along with German and Italian enemy aliens, but the law provides the $20,000 and apology *only to the Japanese*. . . . Should we similarly give reparations and an apology to the German Nazis and Italian fascists who were interned in the same camps?

Without detracting from the obvious energy, sacrifice, and accomplishment of the Japanese, I might point out that they come from a community which has done wonders in this technological age, but which has also kept its Korean minority subjugated, deprived of citizenship and other privileges in the homogeneous, essentially racist society of Japan. While the U.S. accepted thousands of boat people, Japan accepted none.

Unfortunately, the hardworking and industrious Japanese in our midst come from a tradition that does not speak for democracy, for sharing, for universality. I hope the author's offer of a blessing will turn out to foretell a change for the better.

JEROME GREENBLATT

Laguna Hills, California



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LOUIS WINNICK writes:

Emanuel Friedman is eminently correct in reminding us that Asian-Americans do not possess exclusive title to the honorific, "model minority." He would add to the roster the Bay Area's Palestinian Arabs, but could just as readily have added California's Armenians and Greeks, as well as the Lebanese everywhere, and, dare I say (but of course I did), America's Jews. In fact, measured by the paired indexes of high social and economic achievement and low incidence of crime and dependency, there is a lengthy list of ethnic groupings which would qualify for one rung or another on the honor roll. I singled out Asian-Americans, as does almost everyone in the immigrant-research community, for these special reasons: (1) they surmounted a history of violent racial discrimination of a kind experienced by few U.S. minorities other than blacks and Native Americans; (2) the post-1965 waves are advancing at a pace surpassing that of any other immigrant group; and (3) the sheer size of the inflows. Based on current immigration policies and demographic trends, the Asian-American total will approach ten million by the year 2000 and will climb indefinitely thereafter. Quality will be powerfully multiplied by quantity.

I have no quarrel with Frederic Wile's explanation for the disparate outcomes of American blacks and American Asians. I hope he is right in discerning a swelling of the self-help theme in the black community. That theme has a deep and respected heritage in black history. But too much has gone wretchedly wrong in the contemporary inner city. It is increasingly a habitat from which the self-helpers have chosen to escape, leaving behind an underclass which defies available—or even known—remedies. Mr. Wile appears not to have excessive faith in the practical outcome of the self-help prescription. Nor do I, even if neither of us can think of a more time-tested solution.

Jerome Greenblatt errs, I believe, in equating the treatment of Japanese residents with that of German and Italian aliens during the first fearful years of World War II. The detention and relocation of Japanese were wholesale and systemic, based on racial attributes and not on individually identified threats or risks. Indeed, much has been written about the ruthless internment of the émigrés of one enemy nation and the mild sanctions infrequently applied to the émigrés of the other two. The political calculus is one part of the answer; the Japanese vote was as nothing compared to the ethnic German and Italian vote. But the larger answer is the military calculus. Wrongheaded as it seems now, the war cabinet genuinely perceived, during the post-Pearl Harbor hysteria, an imminent danger from Japanese naval and air attacks on West Coast installations and populations. The probability of incursions by the German and Italian fleets was deemed remote, although in both cases sabotage was a concern.

Simon Wiesenthal

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Jacob Heilbrunn's review of *Justice Not Vengeance* by Simon Wiesenthal [Books in Review, October 1990] refers to Wiesenthal's liberation from Mauthausen after which he "decided to devote his life to tracking down Nazis." While the whole world is aware of Wiesenthal's accomplishments, it is not well known that shortly after his liberation, he also played a role in initiating the restitution process for survivors of the Holocaust.

In October 1945, I was stationed in Austria by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) to aid Jews in the displaced-persons camps. One day an emaciated, hollow-eyed survivor looking almost twice his age came to my office, not to ask assistance, but to offer what he thought was important information. He claimed that there were several abandoned freight cars in the Salzburg railroad yards that were filled with Nazi loot from the Jews of Budapest. The so-called "Gold Train"—containing currency, gold, art objects, antiques, jewelry—had originally been destined for Hermann Goering, who specialized in acquiring valuable Jewish possessions, but the Nazis had surrendered before the loot could reach Bavaria.

As skeptical as I was at that time (few people in 1945 really knew the extent of the Nazi plunder), I nevertheless reported the information to U.S. Army officials with whom JDC worked in close liaison. Of course, Wiesenthal's information turned out to be correct. The Army investigated, sealed, and protected the freight cars, and the proceeds from the sale of their contents were eventually made available to the JDC and the Jewish Agency to assist survivors of the Holocaust. Thus, Wiesenthal's alertness and persistence helped make possible the beginning of a process whereby other recovered Jewish assets ultimately provided substantial funds for the rehabilitation of European Jews, as well as restitution of those properties which survivors could identify as belonging to their families.

JAMES P. RICE

Chicago, Illinois

JACOB HEILBRUNN writes:

If, as James Rice asserts, Simon Wiesenthal played an instrumental role in procuring restitution for survivors of the death camps, it is surprising that Wiesenthal does not allude to it in his memoirs. However, as I noted in my review, Wiesenthal does mention that the Nazis successfully hid much plunder, using it to establish an elaborate escape route to South America. In addition, Wiesenthal decries the Austrian government's attempt to keep art treasures stolen by the Nazis and observes that Austria "has compensated survivors of the Nazi terror as slowly and as niggardly as possible." More impediments to restitution for Jews have therefore existed and continue to exist than Mr. Rice's letter might suggest.

Affirmative Action

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I enjoyed reading the article by Frederick R. Lynch, "Surviving Affirmative Action (More or Less)" [August 1990]. I am one of those who has survived it less.

Beginning in 1969 I heard comments like, "It doesn't matter what he knows, so long as he's black," in hiring faculty in the field of political science. Then I was in Europe for a few years. Upon my return, I recall my shock and anger when a Mississippi college responded to my inquiry about employment, "If you are black, please send your credentials to. . . ." I was stunned by the blatant racism.

I continued doing research for others, and publishing on my own, but somehow, no university, no college, no community college, no junior college, would hire me.

A few years ago a friend of mine applied for a teaching post at a

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New England university, near where he resides. He was rejected. This man has a Ph.D. from a major university and has published two major books in his field, which received favorable reviews in both the *New York Review of Books* and the New York *Times Book Review*. Living near the campus, he was given a temporary job teaching one class at the last minute. On two occasions during that semester he did not have to teach because the finalists for the full-time post, the one for which he had been rejected, displayed their skills teaching before his class. Neither had Ph.D.'s; neither had published anything of significance. My friend had to sit there and watch them competing for the post denied him. The chairman of the department later told him informally that of the applicants for the post, only the females had been considered. He could have published 20 books, or 200, and the university would still not have hired him.

Last fall I received a telephone call from the chairman of a department at a Tennessee college where I had applied for a teaching job. He asked me a number of questions, and my hopes began to rise. Then his tone changed. "How can I put this delicately: Are you black?" I said no. He told me they had to hire a black. So the interview, and my hopes, ended.

Last year I published articles in the *American Scholar*, the *Journal of Ethnic Studies*, *Polity*, *Louisiana History*, and the new *Journal of Unconventional History*. In 1989 I published in the *Texas Journal of Political Studies*, the *Florida Historical Quarterly*, *Labor History*, *Journal of Sport History*, *Journal of Ethnic Studies*, *Over Here*, the *Journal of Unconventional History*, and twice in *Theory, Culture, and Society*. . . . I have also worked as a research assistant for the editor of 40 volumes of the works of W.E.B. Du Bois, among others. Thus, few can deny that I am a scholar.

Yet aside from three years' teaching at universities in Europe, I have not had a teaching post in America since 1969. And I have applied in almost every state all the way from junior colleges on up. Frederick R. Lynch survived, more or less. I have survived less and less, running elevators, checking insurance policies, freelancing, even being unemployed.

In America we no longer have the blacklist, or even the red list (Angela Davis has taught for years), but we do have the white list, and the male list. Affirmative action is the white list of our time, and it is as unfair as any blacklist.

HUGH MURRAY
Jackson Heights, New York

FREDERICK R. LYNCH writes:

How many others like Hugh Murray are to be found out there? Few wish to consider this matter openly. On the contrary, Mr. Murray's letter reached me just three days after Jesse Jackson flatly asserted in his syndicated column that "blacks are not taking jobs from whites" under affirmative action. In spite of such recent developments as the struggle over the 1990 Civil Rights bill, there remains a powerful *bipartisan* taboo against admitting that considerable numbers of whites in all sectors of society have been denied equal protection—and sometimes badly mauled—by reverse discrimination. Meanwhile, more universities are boldly advertising "targets of diversity" and other set-aside faculty positions, using dual standards for student admissions and scholarships, setting up "safe speech" rules, and the like.

H. L. Mencken

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

A letter from M. S. Abramsky in your October 1990 issue [Letters from Readers] contains a seriously mutilated quotation from H. L. Mencken's *Treatise on the Gods* concerning what the Sage of Baltimore describes as "the lush and lovely poetry of the Bible." The quotation cited by Mr. Abramsky begins, "The Jews could be put down very plausibly as the most unpleasant race ever heard of, . . ." and goes on from there. But directly following the quoted passage, in the same paragraph, Mencken continues:

> Yet these same Jews, from time immemorial, have been the chief dreamers of the human race, and beyond all comparison its greatest poets. . . . No heritage of modern man is richer and none has made a more brilliant mark on human thought, not even the legacy of the Greeks. All this, of course, may prove either one of two things: that the Jews, in their heyday, were actually superior to all the great people who disdained them, or that poetry is only a minor art. My private inclination is to embrace the latter hypothesis, but I do not pause to argue the point.

MAYNARD KNISKERN
Monroeville, Alabama

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Enter the Peace Party

Norman Podhoretz

AT FIRST it looked as though everything really had changed. Here, after all, was a President of the United States sending many thousands of troops halfway around the world to Saudi Arabia, and yet for more than two months there was nary a peep out of the old antiwar movement. In fact, the only protests that amounted to anything materialized not in the movement's favorite venues, the campuses and the streets, but rather on the op-ed pages and the television talk shows, and these, to everyone's amazement, emanated not from the Left but almost entirely from a number of born-again isolationists on the Right. Yet the new conservative isolationists were themselves isolated. Thus, even while the most strident of them, Patrick J. Buchanan, went on asserting in his syndicated column and on television that the American people were against George Bush's decision to threaten force, let alone actually to use it, in response to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, the polls were showing overwhelming popular support for the President.

Similarly with Congress, where opposition to the President, among Democrats no less than among Republicans, was so faint as to be inaudible. It was these extraordinary levels of support that explained what some commentators found so mysterious: that with nearly 200,000 American troops having just been dispatched to the Saudi Arabian desert where they were poised for battle against an even larger Iraqi army, scarcely a word was uttered against the President's policy by any candidate running for office in the midterm election campaigns of 1990. Obviously politicians of both parties were convinced that the voters would turn against anyone who had anything critical to say about this wholly unexpected American intervention.

The silence of the politicians could be explained, then, by the professional imperative to watch out for public opinion. But what accounted for the silence of the antiwar activists and ideologues who were not subject to any such exigencies? According to one of them, Todd Gitlin, who served in the early 60's as president of the flagship organization of the New Left, Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), the main reason was that Bush had acted not unilaterally but with the endorsement of the United Nations. This reversion to what Gitlin called "the collective-security paradigm of World War II" (as against "the Vietnam paradigm" of unilateral American intervention) evidently threw the antiwar movement off. "Not only do all generals fight the last war," Gitlin was quoted as saying by the Washington *Post*, "but antiwar people fight the last war, too." Another famous antiwar activist, the Reverend William Sloane Coffin, told the *Wall Street Journal* that the reaction of the UN gave him so much "pleasure" that he even "came out marginally in favor of Bush. . . ."

A second factor that seemed to have thrown the antiwar movement off was the peculiar position of Saddam Hussein. As a self-proclaimed socialist fighting against the feudal monarchies of the Persian Gulf and defying the might of the United States, the Iraqi tyrant could normally have been expected to attract automatic support from the leftists who make up the antiwar movement in this country. Nor would the fact that Saddam Hussein is a cruel and ruthless dictator have mattered, any more than the cruelty and ruthlessness of other socialist dictators who had been challenged by the United States—including Castro, Ho Chi Minh, Ortega, and Mao Zedong—ever deprived them of leftist backing in America (or anywhere else). But what may have spelled the difference here was the withdrawal of the support Iraq had formerly received from the Soviet Union, which made it difficult to see in Saddam Hussein what the Left once saw in Castro and the others and what Saddam himself claimed to be: a participant in the international struggle against capitalism and imperialism.

The change in the Soviet role also deprived the antiwar movement of what in the post-Vietnam period had been its most effective tactic: playing on the fear that American intervention could lead to a confrontation with the Soviet Union which might escalate into a nuclear holocaust. Where the Persian Gulf crisis was concerned, the shoe, for once, was on the other foot. For here it was hawks like the New York *Times* columnists William Safire and A.M. Rosenthal who could and did warn that we would be faced in a few years with a nuclear threat from Saddam Hussein if we failed

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to launch air strikes against his military infrastructure now. "Fly now," wrote the former Pentagon official, Richard Perle, making the same point, "or pay later."

But if at first these factors added up to the cat that got the antiwar movement's tongue, the power began to seep out of them as the stalemate in the Persian Gulf dragged on with no resolution in sight. By November, Todd Gitlin had become unhappy with Bush's refusal to "play diplomatic cards," which he found "redolent of a very bad old script" (presumably he meant that the "Vietnam paradigm" had slyly wormed its way back in again). William Sloane Coffin also now regretted having been even "marginally in favor of Bush," while other ghosts of protests past like Daniel Ellsberg and Ramsey Clark, who had both been hostile to the President's policy from the outset, pulled themselves together and started rounding up their own troop reserves. (Clark, for so long second only to Jesse Jackson in the competition for most pilgrimages to dictators who defy the United States or seize American hostages, was beaten to Baghdad by Jackson, but he did eventually manage to get there himself and to report—of course—that Saddam Hussein was eager to negotiate a peaceful solution to the crisis.)

Nor was it only the old antiwar movement that began finding its tongue as the stalemate in the gulf extended past October and into November. So, too, and especially once election day was safely behind them, did the Democrats in Congress. Unlike the radical antiwar activists, the Democrats (no doubt remembering how badly they had been burned by a too hasty denunciation of the invasion of Grenada) did not advocate an American withdrawal from the Persian Gulf. Instead they chided the President for the impatience he was expressing and urged him to give the economic sanctions already in place a chance to drive Saddam Hussein out of Kuwait without resort to arms.

No sooner, for example, had Bush announced in early November that we were switching from a defensive to an offensive posture than Senator Bill Bradley of New Jersey attacked him for imperiling "the international coalition he assembled so skillfully to deter Iraq's aggression in the Persian Gulf." Perhaps Bradley had been too busy getting himself reelected to notice that this coalition had been assembled with the declared aim not simply of deterring Iraq but of rolling back the aggression it had already committed, through sanctions if possible and by military force if necessary. Apparently also too distracted by his reelection campaign to have noticed the many reports suggesting that the sanctions were having very little effect, Bradley flatly predicted that "In six to nine months under boycott pressure the military machine Iraq has built up over twenty years will begin to crumble." That our own political ability to keep troops sitting in the desert was at least as likely as the Iraqi military machine to begin crumbling after six to nine months did not disturb the serenity of Bradley's calculations.

There was also a small group of erstwhile hawks, made up of former government officials like Zbigniew Brzezinski, James R. Schlesinger, and General William Odom, who opposed going to war because, envisaging a worst-case scenario, they thought the price in casualties and political instability would be too high. But could the threat posed by Saddam Hussein be dealt with in any other way? And might not the price of failing to deal with that threat be even higher? To the first of these questions the new Persian-Gulf doves had only the most implausible answers, mostly of the sanctions-*cum*-diplomacy kind*; to the second, they had no answers at all.

Still, the mainstream centers of antiwar opinion, whether in Congress or in the media, differed from the forces to the Left and Right of them not only in refusing to demand that the boys be brought back home, but also in refusing to rule out the use of force at some future stage of the crisis. Thus, Bradley, joining with the hawks on the military strategy he would favor "if sanctions ultimately failed," said that "we would still have overwhelming air power to achieve our objectives." Senator Sam Nunn of Georgia took roughly the same position. And even an Arabist like Judith Kipper of the Brookings Institution, who came back from her own pilgrimage to Baghdad urging Bush to make a deal with Saddam Hussein (at Israel's expense, naturally), stipulated that military action might yet be "necessary" if he were to turn down such a deal.

Running alongside these calls for patience and/or negotiation, however, and considerably undermining the credibility of the concession that military action might eventually have to be taken, was the complaint that the President had not yet explained to the American people why he seemed so intent on dragging us into a war. So often was this complaint repeated, by hawks and doves alike, and so much plausibility did it gain from Bush's by now universally recognized deficiencies with "the vision thing," that its blatant falsity went almost entirely unremarked. For in truth the President, notwithstanding what Professor Henry F. Graff of Columbia correctly described as his "tin ear and his rambling, sometimes incoherent style," had explained in clear and intelligible terms why we were in Saudi Arabia and why he believed we

* See my "A Statement on the Persian Gulf Crisis" in the November 1990 issue of COMMENTARY for a detailed demonstration of why advocates of this course are guilty of willing the end but not the means.

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might at some point have to go to war against Saddam Hussein.

Indeed, from the very beginning, he himself and his people had done precisely what Professor Graff and so many others had accused him of failing to do, which was to spell out "the purposes and goals of his intervention." These were, he said over and over again, to prevent Saddam Hussein from invading Saudi Arabia, to annul his conquest of Kuwait, to bring back the government he had driven out of that country, and to free the American hostages he had seized.

Admittedly, other goals were sometimes hinted at, including the toppling of Saddam Hussein, the elimination of Iraq's military infrastructure, especially its nascent nuclear capability, and the construction of a new regional security arrangement. Admittedly, too, these additional objectives were not consistently stressed; some of them were mentioned or suggested only to be fudged or quietly shelved for one political or diplomatic reason or another. But while this may have caused a bit of confusion, there was never any ambiguity about the main purposes of the intervention.

Nor was there any lack of clarity in the administration's answer to the far more difficult question of why these purposes were important enough to warrant a resort to arms. Again from the very beginning, three reasons were given: first, the need to prevent a vital natural resource from falling into the hands of a ruthless and unscrupulous tyrant; second, the need to repel a clear-cut act of aggression so as to discourage other such acts in the future; and third, the need to establish a more peaceful order in the post-cold-war world.

When Bush first sent the troops to Saudi Arabia, these answers (as we have seen) were sufficiently persuasive to mobilize overwhelming support from Congress, from the media, and from the American people in general. If, then, everyone loved the President's case, tin ear and all, in August, what was the problem in November?

To Rosenthal, Safire, and Perle—who rightly kept insisting that getting Saddam Hussein out of Kuwait was not enough, that it was a necessary but not sufficient objective—the problem was the administration's refusal to specify as our main goal the elimination of his ability to wage chemical warfare now and nuclear and biological warfare in the future. Agreeing with this, other hawks, like Senator Malcolm Wallop of Wyoming, were additionally bothered by the lack of a sharp focus. "I'd be happy to support the policy," Wallop assured the *Wall Street Journal* columnist, Paul Gigot, "if I knew what it was. But it can't be 'jobs' one day and 'I've had it up to here' another day."

In advancing these criticisms, the hawks were expressing their frustration over the inevitable development of second thoughts, and the concomitant decline in popular backing for the President, as the stalemate wore on, and they were in effect pleading with him to come up with the magic words that would turn things around again. (And indeed, the polls did confirm that to most Americans the best reason for going to war was to prevent Saddam Hussein from acquiring nuclear weapons.)

The doves were another matter. When they complained that Bush had failed to explain his policy to the American people, they might pretend that they were talking about his poor powers of articulation, but what they really meant was that they were against using military force. Why not simply say so then? Why, for instance, when asked whether he thought that going to war against Iraq was in America's vital interest, did Senator Nunn refuse to answer ("The burden is on the President. I'll let him make the case before I respond")? Because, it would seem, it was much riskier for the politicians and much harder for the pundits to produce a convincing case of their own for an alternative to military action than to allege disingenuously that no case for military action had yet been made by the President, or to characterize the case he actually had made in derisively reductive terms.

The first such effort at demystification, aimed at the first of Bush's three reasons, came in the form of the crack that he was sending Americans to Saudi Arabia in order "to make the world safe for gas guzzlers." Whenever the President tried to counter this assault by declaring that "our way of life" was at stake, or when his Secretary of State, in an attempt to bring it all home to the ordinary American, later substituted the more concrete issue of "jobs," the response was a barrage of sermons about greed, cynicism, and environmental depredation.

Yet the President was stating what, in a culture less degraded by callow ideas about economic interest left over from the radical movement of the 60's, would have been seen as a self-evident proposition. Oil *is* the lifeblood of our civilization and any threat to the supply of it *is* a threat to our way of life. So obvious is this that it is impossible to understand how the historian Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., a self-declared member of the "realist" school of foreign policy, can claim that the vital interests of the United States are not at stake in the gulf. If oil does not fit the realist definition of a vital interest, what on earth does? Citing the charge by a group of British theologians that "there would be no international force in the gulf if Kuwait produced carrots and Saudi Arabia were one vast onion bed," the London weekly the *Spectator* offers the following devastating reply:

> This is certainly so. Nor would Saddam Hussein have invaded Kuwait for its vegetables. But if onions and carrots were all there was in the world to eat, and the gulf was the major producer of these, tanks, ships, and planes would still be massing in Saudi Arabia. The supply of oil is as necessary to the West and the Third

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> World as the supply of food. . . . Control of the major oilfields . . . would enable Saddam Hussein, a man cruel enough to use chemical warfare on his own civilian Kurds, to blackmail the world.

But by far the easiest element of the President's policy to deride was the promise to restore the ousted rulers of Kuwait to their previous position once Saddam Hussein was driven out; and who better to deride it than the wittiest member of the United States Senate, Daniel Patrick Moynihan of New York?: "They're going to send our men and women into battle for those Kuwaitis who have taken over the Sheraton Hotel in Taif and are sitting there in their white robes, drinking coffee, and urging us to go to war. What is the matter with George Bush?"

Translated into terms like these, the policy does of course seem ridiculous. Who would wish to harm even so much as one hair of an American head in order to put an anachronistic feudal dynasty back on its throne? Yet it ill behooves Senator Moynihan to be so flip about the toppling of a legitimate government by an invading foreign army. As a great champion of the sanctity of international law, he of all people might have been expected to throw his intellectual and political weight behind a policy aimed at enforcing the rule against unprovoked cross-border aggression—a policy which must necessarily involve, at least as a minimum first step, the restoration of the status quo ante.

Be that as it may, there are those who feel somewhat less reverential than Senator Moynihan toward the idea of international law but who can nevertheless detect a prudential imperative in drawing an early line against a ruthless aggressor even though it entails defending a regime about which they are certainly no more enthusiastic than he is. After all, the question "Why die for Danzig?" was just as hard to answer in 1939 as the question "Why die for Kuwait?" is today.

Which brings up the analogy George Bush has so often drawn between Saddam Hussein and Hitler. This analogy, used to bolster the President's second reason for a possible resort to arms, has itself been derided as a great exaggeration: Saddam Hussein, goes the riposte, is no Hitler either in point of evil or in point of power. Yet when Hitler occupied the Rhineland in 1936, a moment which roughly corresponds to the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq, he had not yet attained to the level of evil Saddam Hussein has already reached in launching a pointless war against Iran that resulted in a million casualties, in using poison gas against his own Kurdish citizens, and in the grisly atrocities he has committed in Kuwait. Nor was the Hitler of 1936 as powerful as he later became, which is why there is general agreement that he could have been stopped (and a larger war averted) by early resistance.

In exploring this analogy (and incidentally cautioning against a settlement that would leave Saddam Hussein with his military machine intact), Eliot A. Cohen of Johns Hopkins recently wrote*:

> Unless we crush [Saddam Hussein] and batter his war machine we will open the way to schemes of Iraqi hegemony in the Arab world fed by vast financial resources, a surprisingly sophisticated technological base, and absolute ruthlessness. The stakes are . . . the very nature of the world our children and grandchildren will inhabit. A world safe for Saddam Hussein is a world safe, ultimately, for nuclear, chemical, and biological warfare waged to feed or, in defensive desperation, to thwart the ambitions of Saddam and his ilk. That world looms less than ten years ahead of us. The Hitler analogy may be overdone, but at the end of the day there is a good bit to be said for it.

Finally, there was the argument—advanced more often by the reborn isolationists of the Right than by the peace party of the Left—that even if the case for neutralizing Saddam Hussein was valid, and even if this could not be accomplished short of war, it still did not prove that we were the ones who ought to do the necessary fighting and dying. Why should we not stand aside and let the Europeans and the Japanese, who are much more dependent on Middle Eastern oil than we are, assume the burden? But given that, for all their economic prosperity, our allies do not now have the power to take on Saddam Hussein, asking them to assume this responsibility is tantamount to saying that he should be allowed to prevail.

The arguments of the old antiwar activists, like those of the mainstream liberal doves, centered on issues of tactics and strategy, but by November the churches had gotten into the act as well, inevitably bringing with them the moral questions about which they presumably know more than the rest of us.

First off the mark were the Catholic bishops, who warned that going to war against Iraq might very well violate the moral standards which, according to the Catholic "just-war" doctrine, should govern the use of force. A day or so later, the National Council of Churches (NCC), the umbrella organization of the liberal Protestant denominations, went even further and denounced "the illogical logic of militarism and war" in which the Bush administration was supposedly caught up. The NCC also recommended that member churches lobby and demonstrate against "sending our sons and daughters" to the gulf region and asked them to demand that the President "bring home at once all those not needed as part of the UN security force."

* "How to Fight Iraq," COMMENTARY, November 1990.

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The social critic Garry Wills, who has just published a book on the role of religion in American politics, thinks that the NCC resolution expresses a "moral vision" which makes Bush's emphasis on oil and jobs look "crass." But setting up so rigid a distinction between morality and self-interest surely violates the spirit of the just-war doctrine which, as first formulated by St. Augustine, envisages circumstances where the two might be compatible. And surely a war against Saddam Hussein—combining as it would the pursuit of our own interests, the elimination of a clear evil threatening many other countries in addition to our own, and the opportunity to prevent something worse in the future—constitutes just such a circumstance.

George Weigel of the Ethics and Public Policy Center, who is perhaps the leading American authority on the Catholic just-war tradition, also believes that it would sanction military action against Saddam Hussein because "what is being determined in the gulf is whether there will be a minimum of political and economic order in international public life, or whether we will descend into Hobbes's war of all against all." In this Weigel endorses the third of the President's three main justifications for a possible resort to arms. But in what represents the single most valid criticism of Bush's stated policy, Weigel goes on to emphasize that if we are to satisfy St. Augustine's criterion of a just war as one fought for the sake of "the tranquillity of order," then

> any outcome that does not include the destruction of Saddam Hussein's chemical weapons, his nascent nuclear-weapons capability, his missiles, and the bulk of his armor is a morally and strategically unsatisfactory outcome. For anything short of that simply guarantees that a more horrible war will ensue down the line.

In addition to thus adding moral weight to the strategic analysis of hawks like Cohen, Perle, and Safire, Weigel concludes with a point that evidently never occurred either to the National Council of Churches or the bishops of his own Church:

> There is no escape from moral responsibility in these matters. Those who urge a proportionate and discriminate use of armed force against Saddam Hussein take on the moral responsibility for their actions: which will, tragically but certainly, include the killing of innocents. But it should also be understood that those who reject the use of military force, in the case of Saddam Hussein, have not been absolved from moral responsibility for what follows: which will, certainly, include the killing of innocents, and in large numbers.

Weigel wrote these words long before the President, on the heels of the Security Council resolution of November 29 authorizing "all necessary means" to get Saddam Hussein out of Kuwait by January 15, threw a large and meaty bone to the peace party with the announcement that he was sending Secretary of State James A. Baker 3d to Baghdad. But Weigel's injunction has become more relevant than ever as a prescient warning against the moral danger of a change in American policy that, caving in altogether to the peace party, would settle merely for persuading Saddam Hussein to withdraw from Kuwait. Worse yet, such a change in policy would link his withdrawal to the promise of new pressures on Israel (as though Israel's occupation of territories in a defensive war in which its survival was literally at stake had anything in common with the unprovoked Iraqi aggression against Kuwait). And worst of all, the new policy would reward Saddam Hussein still further with the assurance of a subsequent negotiation over his "historical claims" to and "legitimate grievances" against Kuwait. In this monstrously ironic scenario, George Bush would have compared Saddam Hussein to Hitler only to give himself an opportunity to play not the noble role of Churchill but the ignominious part of Chamberlain.

ONCE upon a time, before the end of the cold war, we were told that we must not use force because it might escalate into a nuclear holocaust. Now we are being told by the new peace party, with its constant harping on "body bags," that we must not use force because someone might get hurt. If this attitude should prevail, the United States would have proved itself unwilling to undertake military action even when the reasons for doing so were politically and morally compelling and when the conditions were as favorable as they were ever likely to be. Favorable because of a higher degree of political support both at home and abroad than could be expected to survive a long stalemate; favorable because the enemy was not as strong as he was bound later to become; and favorable because the odds of victory at reasonable cost (especially if we relied mainly on air strikes) were at least as good as the chance of heavy casualties.

Among the other questions to be answered by the Persian Gulf crisis, then, is whether anything really has changed since Vietnam, or whether our defeat in that war has left us capable only of fly-swatting operations like Grenada and Panama but otherwise permanently debellicized and forever unmanned by the idea (which Nietzsche saw as the mark of a slave) that nothing is worth fighting and dying for. If that should turn out to be the case, then God help this country—and the rest of the world as well.

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The Question of Black Leadership

Arch Puddington

THE question of black leadership has been placed in sharp focus by a recent series of unsettling and sometimes ugly incidents.

First, there were the highly publicized travails of Washington, D.C. Mayor Marion Barry. Having scoffed at repeated reports of drug use, and indeed having enlisted, with considerable fanfare, in a "Down With Dope" campaign aimed at the Washington schools, Barry sat without obvious embarrassment in a courtroom while witness after witness attested to his prodigious appetite for crack cocaine and a videotape showed him sharing the drug with a female acquaintance in a hotel room just prior to his arrest by federal authorities.

Although hardly the first American politician to be brought down by addiction to drugs or alcohol, Barry can certainly claim some distinction in his attitude of arrogant unrepentance, a stance which was modified only at the time of his sentencing for conviction of cocaine possession. And just as disturbing as the mayor's behavior was the generally tolerant, and in some cases supportive, response of the Washington black political establishment. While a few voices called for Barry's retirement from public affairs, most either maintained a studied silence or actually endorsed the theory that Barry was the victim of a white conspiracy to deprive black America of strong leaders. Barry himself gave credence to the idea of a white master plan to persecute black political leadership in denouncing the American "injustice system" after drawing a six-months jail sentence.

In New York, meanwhile, the trial of three black youths accused of participating in the beating and rape of the Central Park jogger took on a particularly nasty edge when supporters of the defendants began harassing the victim as she arrived at and left the courthouse. Egged on by a motley crew of "community activists" and radical attorneys, the crowd yelled obscenities, accused the jogger of deliberately lying, and chanted, "The boyfriend did it!"—meaning that the woman's lover had committed the rape and she, to conceal the fact, had falsely accused the young black men.

New York was also the scene of a prolonged boycott by blacks of two Korean-American grocery stores in the Flatbush section of Brooklyn. The action was launched after accusations that store personnel had struck a black female customer. Unfortunately, the facts remain murky, largely due to a policy of noncooperation with law-enforcement officials and the press adopted by the alleged victim and her attorney (a policy that has became an almost automatic tactic in any racial incidents in New York in which radical black attorneys like C. Vernon Mason and Alton Maddox and "advisers" like the Reverend Al Sharpton become involved). People attempting to enter the stores were forced to run a gauntlet of jeers and curses, the most obnoxious of which were reserved for those blacks who rejected the notion that a self-appointed "boycott committee" had the right to decide where they did their shopping. Attempts at conciliation (themselves half-hearted) by New York's black mayor, David Dinkins, were unavailing; it appeared that nothing short of driving the stores out of business would satisfy the boycott leaders.

Then there was the case of Gus Savage, a black Chicago Congressman notorious for his erratic behavior and racialist views. Accused of sexually harassing a Peace Corps worker while in Africa on congressional business, Savage dismissed the charges as a "white media plot." Savage's tactics in dealing subsequently with a primary challenge by a strong black opponent were just as tawdry. Indeed, Savage ran a one-issue campaign which obsessively concentrated on his opponent's having received campaign funds from outside the congressional district—to be precise, money from Jewish sources. Again and again, Savage spoke of "Jewish money," "the Jewish lobby," "pro-Israel money." At one rally he read from a selective list of his opponent's contributors: selective, that is, insofar as all the names mentioned by Savage were obviously Jewish. Far from leading to his defeat, this strategy carried Savage to victory.

THEN, although it qualifies more as phenomenon than incident, there is the reemergence of Louis Farrakhan as a major

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and increasingly accepted presence in black American affairs. Some would argue against defining the head of the Nation of Islam as a black leader, but Farrakhan simply can no longer be written off as a marginal figure. Wherever he speaks, he draws large and enthusiastic audiences, and this includes the many college campuses he visits. Black civil-rights and elected officials, who in the past were willing to distance themselves in public from Farrakhan's race-supremacist philosophy, now allow his far-fetched pronouncements to pass in silence, or even go out of their way to lend credibility to his views. For instance, Farrakhan recently spoke at no less a forum than the annual conference of the Congressional Black Caucus, where he demanded "reparations" for American blacks and accused whites of complicity in black-on-black violence. Another striking piece of evidence pointing to Farrakhan's elevated stature is the attention lavished on him by the "white" press. This past year both the Washington *Post* and the Washington *Times* took the unusual step of publishing lengthy verbatim excerpts from interviews with Farrakhan, thus treating him with a seriousness hardly merited by the ludicrousness of his ideas.

The press, however, is less concerned about Farrakhan's ideas than it is fascinated by the rise to a position of influence of a man who openly espouses a philosophy of black racial superiority. Farrakhan, to be sure, has lately avoided the kind of extreme inflammatory declarations he used to make. But while no longer openly praising Hitler or describing Judaism as a "gutter religion," Farrakhan continues to concentrate his appeal on a combination of black chauvinism and anti-Semitism, both of which go over quite well with his largely middle-class black audiences. Addressing a Chicago Black Muslim gathering in 1989, for example, Farrakhan presented a long, rambling account of a Jewish plot to destroy black leadership:

> The other night I woke up, oh, about three in the morning. And these words looked like they had grown to be block letters in my brain. They were from the Koran, and these words were: AND THE JEWS PLANNED. . . . I have become Public Enemy Number One. And the Jews planned. . . . So now they have declared they will stop at nothing until they have destroyed Louis Farrakhan. . . . The enemy is getting rid of leader after leader. . . . They're getting ready to make a move on the black community. . . . And the Jews planned. . . . They have an elaborate plan, brothers and sisters, and you'll be surprised who they're using.

Nor are his conspiratorial theories limited to Jews. On another occasion, he charged that General Colin Powell, the first black chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, was conspiring to wage war on his fellow blacks in the guise of a war on drugs.

ALTHOUGH differing in some respects, the cases listed here contain a number of important common features. First, while the incidents and individuals are routinely described as controversial, there is very little controversy as to the basic facts. By his own, grudging, admission, we know that Marion Barry had a drug problem during his tenure as mayor. And based on overwhelming evidence, we can conclude that the jogger defendants were guilty, that the Korean store boycott is unjustified and racist, that the presence of Gus Savage in Congress dishonors that institution, and that Louis Farrakhan is a black racist.

Second, no matter how damning the evidence, many blacks cling to the notion that Barry, Savage, Farrakhan, the jogger defendants, and others are the victims of white racist persecution, whether exercised through the media, the courts, the federal government, or a mythical world Jewish conspiracy.

Finally, except in rare instances, neither the misbehavior of prominent blacks nor the extreme or paranoid views of their supporters have drawn rebukes from mainstream figures in the black community. On the contrary, such figures have sometimes lent credibility to white-conspiracy fantasies. Thus, in the middle of the Barry affair, Benjamin Hooks, the executive director of the NAACP, warned that organization's national convention of "the vicious assault on black leaders." Thus, too, among Chicago's black political establishment, Gus Savage's strategy was regarded with approval, and the city's leading black journalist, Vernon Jarrett, referred to Savage as "one of the country's most dependable black elected officials" and condemned his opponent's reliance on "outsider" money (a position which might interest the black Democrat Harvey Gantt, whose recent campaign against Senator Jesse Helms was heavily funded by liberal sources outside North Carolina).

In the case of Savage, at least, his anti-Jewish diatribes did provoke the sharp censure of Ron Brown, the black chairman of the Democratic party, and more muted criticism from two black Congressmen, Charles Rangel and William Gray, who had attended a Savage victory rally at which he crowed about his triumph over the Jews. But in general, black leaders inclined to challenge militant elements have learned that there are risks involved in such an undertaking, as evidenced by David Dinkins's experience in attempting to deal with the boycott of the Korean-owned stores.

Elected largely because of his promise to restore harmony to New York's troubled racial environment, Dinkins initially dealt with the boycott, his first major racial controversy, by adopting a position of studied neutrality. Eventually, after it became clear that, given the boycotters' adamant position, "quiet diplomacy" was getting nowhere, Dinkins issued a statement condemning the action: "I oppose all bigotry against anyone every-

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where," he said. "I abhor it. I denounce it." While Dinkins's actions did not match the toughness of his words (his administration actually opposed enforcing a court order requiring the picketers to stand at least 50 feet from the targeted stores), his statement was important in identifying the boycott as an act of racial bias.

The response of the boycott supporters was not long in coming. The day after Dinkins's statement, C. Vernon Mason derided the mayor as a "lover of white people," who "ain't got no African left in him." Predictably, Mason tossed in a bit of anti-Semitism for good measure: Dinkins, he sneered, "got too many yarmulkes on his head." Yet despite Mason's unsavory reputation (he was, among other things, one of the leading perpetrators of the Tawana Brawley fraud), few black voices were raised in Dinkins's defense—or, for that matter, in condemnation of Mason's slanders. On the contrary, public support for the boycott was announced by a cross-section of the black-community leadership, including journalists, elected officials, and clergymen. Congressman Major Owens, who represents a Brooklyn district, spoke of "these outsiders, be they Koreans or Asians or whites, [who] come into the main streets of our neighborhoods to make money." The city's black newspapers endorsed the boycott, as, in most emphatic terms, did callers to black radio stations. One of the sharpest polemics was written by the Reverend Lawrence Lucas, a prominent black Catholic priest. Lucas accused the mayor of having caved into "pressure from the white media, the white economic/political structure, the white federal government, and the white City Council and their Negro stooges."

It is true that David Dinkins, the first black mayor of New York, remains highly popular among his black constituents, while Mason, Maddox, and Sharpton are looked on by many blacks as a source of embarrassment. Nonetheless, Dinkins is clearly off the mark when he tries to dismiss his militant critics as deriving their credibility solely from the media's appetite for sensationalism. Al Sharpton has gained prominence because he understands that there is in the inner city a constituency for a politics based on resentment, anger, and race hatred. When issues can be framed as pitting blacks against Asian merchants, the "criminal-justice system," the white (sometimes "Zionist") media, or white politicians, then an irresponsible position built on innuendo, conspiracy theories, character assassination, or lies will often find support among large segments of the black population.

The potential constituency for such a politics of race demagoguery was most vividly, and disturbingly, illustrated by a New York *Times*-WCBS poll which found that fully 32 percent of blacks believed that black politicians were being singled out for investigation, and another 45 percent thought that this might be true. In the same poll, fully 25 percent of blacks answered in the affirmative when asked if they believed that "the government deliberately makes sure that drugs are easily available in poor black neighborhoods in order to harm black people," and another 35 percent responded that the charge might be true, leaving only one-third of the black respondents to dismiss the notion outright. More astonishing yet, 10 percent of blacks polled agreed with the incredible suggestion that AIDS was "deliberately created in a laboratory in order to infect black people."

These bizarre and self-destructive fantasies are by no means prevalent only among the black poor. There are numerous reports of middle-class professionals coming to embrace what Jim Sleeper, in his recent book, *The Closest of Strangers*,* has called "ever-more baroque theories of white genocidal conspiracy." Even more appalling, however, is the role of those prominent blacks who, instead of providing a much needed dose of truth-telling, are actually feeding the notion of a genocidal white master plan against blacks.

Nowhere is this tendency more pronounced than on the question of drugs. According to Farrakhan, "the epidemic of drugs and violence in the black community stems from a calculated attempt [by whites] to foster black self-destruction." The much acclaimed black film-maker Spike Lee believes "it is no mistake that the majority of drugs in this country is being deposited in black and Hispanic and lower-income neighborhoods." As evidence, Lee cites a scene from the movie *The Godfather* in which Mafia chieftains decide that the drug trade will be concentrated in black neighborhoods. Andrew Cooper, publisher of the *City Sun*, a black weekly based in Brooklyn, contends, "There's just too much money in narcotics. People really believe they are being victimized by The Man. If the government wanted to stop it, it could stop it." And for Father Lawrence Lucas, drugs are just one element in a massive white scheme to destroy young black males:

> There is an element that finds this a beautiful aspect of the genocidal attitude toward African-American youth. You're killing them with drugs. You're killing them with the crime connected with drugs. You send them to jail and eliminate African-American males as fathers. White middle-class Americans are the ones who make the money on the billions spent on law enforcement necessary to keep feeding black and Hispanic youths through the jail mill. It's a little bit too coincidental not to believe this was orchestrated by a group of people for other purposes.

* See the review by Scott McConnell in the December 1990 issue of COMMENTARY.—ED.

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Most black leaders do not share the opinions expressed by Father Lucas, but they are loath to challenge those who disseminate the clichés, falsehoods, and fantasies which are increasingly becoming normal fare in black discourse. A case in point is the NAACP's Benjamin Hooks who, while rejecting "white-devil" theories, felt compelled to sympathize with those preaching such ideas by speaking of the "anguished cry of people who really don't understand how [the drug problem] got started in the first place and why it's out of control."

For Hooks, the main problem seemed to be white society's "absolute indifference bordering on the criminal" toward the drug problem in the inner cities. On this score, Hooks's complaint that the drug problem became a drug crisis only when it spread from black neighborhoods to the white suburbs has merit. There is also some justice in David Dinkins's assertion that real outrage over violent crime in New York was elicited only after a young white Utah tourist was killed while defending his family from thugs on a Manhattan subway platform. But the problem here is that blacks themselves, to the extent that they react defensively or with hostility toward attempts to diagnose the black community's ills, are partly responsible for the larger society's indifference toward the inner city's plight. The shabby treatment of Daniel P. Moynihan, James P. Coleman, and other white scholars stands as a cautionary example to those tempted to conduct research on racial themes, especially if there is a danger that the conclusions might clash with the prevailing black position on litmus-test issues like affirmative action.

FURTHERMORE, those who contend that the debate over sensitive racial issues can only be carried out by blacks must confront the disgraceful attempts to silence any black who questions the orthodoxy of the day. Glenn Loury of Harvard has been called a "traitor" to his race for talking too much about the internal pathologies of the black community, while Thomas Sowell of the Hoover Institution is routinely described as a front man for white domination because of his attacks on affirmative action and his insistence that blacks adhere to high academic standards. More recently, Shelby Steele, a black critic of affirmative action who, on other issues, tends toward a liberal stance, has been denounced by Hooks as a "lowdown dirty rascal"; indeed, Hooks has labeled all blacks who dissent from the orthodox position on affirmative action as "some of the biggest liars the world ever saw," and a "new breed of Uncle Toms."

The opprobrium directed at Loury, Sowell, and Steele contrasts interestingly with the tolerance exhibited toward blacks who, while voicing thoroughly irresponsible and destructive ideas, do so as adversaries of white society. Consider, in this regard, the views on teenage motherhood expressed by the celebrated black novelist, Toni Morrison, in a 1989 interview with *U.S. News & World Report*:

> *Q.* This leads to the problem of the depressingly large number of single-parent households and the crisis in unwed teenage pregnancies. Do you see a way out of that set of worsening circumstances and statistics?
>
> *A.* Well, neither of those things seems to me a debility. I don't think a female running a house is a problem, a broken family. It's perceived as one because of the notion that a head is a man. Two parents can't raise a child any more than one. You need a whole community—everybody—to raise a child. . . . And the little nuclear family is a paradigm that just doesn't work. It doesn't work for white people or for black people.
>
> *Q.* And teenage pregnancies?
>
> *A.* Everybody's grandmother was a teenager when they got pregnant. Whether they were fifteen or sixteen, they ran a house, a farm, they went to work, they raised their children.
>
> *Q.* But everybody's grandmother didn't have the potential for living a different kind of life. These teenagers—fifteen, sixteen—haven't had time to find out if they have special abilities, talents. They're babies having babies.
>
> *A.* The child's not going to hurt them. Of course, it is absolutely time consuming. But who cares about the schedule? . . . They're not babies. . . . The body is ready to have babies, that's why they are in a passion to do it.
>
> *Q.* You don't feel that these girls will never know whether they could have been teachers, or whatever?
>
> *A.* They can be teachers. They can be brain surgeons. We have to help them become brain surgeons. That's my job. I want to take them all in my arms and say, "Your baby is beautiful and so are you and, honey, you can do it. And when you want to be a brain surgeon, call me—I will take care of your baby." That's the attitude you have to have about human life. Only we don't want to pay for it.

Although Toni Morrison is not alone in her celebration of teenage motherhood, hers is probably a minority view. Yet if most blacks differ from her, they have carefully refrained from airing their disagreement in public.

IRONICALLY, the notion that a qualification for leadership in the black community is a measure of antagonism toward whites and toward the American system in general emerged only after the basic goals of the civil-rights movement had been won. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the other leaders of that movement were not bitter critics of "white America," and repeatedly emphasized their respect for America's democratic institutions and economic prosperity. A degree of black alienation was perhaps inevitable during the angry last few years of the 1960's,

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particularly when it became clear that the disappearance of segregation would not automatically lead to dramatic changes in black economic conditions. Nonetheless, it would have been reasonable to expect that separatist and nationalist ideas—and postures—would fade away as the external barriers to black social and economic progress continued to fall.

Why, then, did this not happen? Of the many reasons, one of the most important is the influence of the white Left. To direct attention to this factor is not to resurrect the old canard about undue Communist influence on the civil-rights movement or on Dr. King. But the fact remains that Marxist ideas and political movements, including Communism, have found a receptivity among black intellectuals and politicians which is unusually high by historical American standards and unprecedented at the present time. This has been particularly true for politically motivated blacks in Northern cities like New York, Detroit, and Chicago, where the Communist party made inroads in the trade unions, among writers and intellectuals, and in other spheres in which blacks began to participate during the 30's and 40's. Ultimately an impressive number of blacks who had been members of the party or had reached political maturity in a party-influenced milieu rose to various positions of leadership, ranging from community organizer to city councilman to mayor to member of Congress.

Again, the point is not that the civil-rights movement was "dominated" by Communists or left-wingers, but rather that the course of black political development was strongly tinged by a Marxian perspective which seeks not the reform of American institutions but their outright rejection. One manifestation has been a marked preference among blacks concerned about foreign affairs for revolutionary Third World regimes over more moderate, pro-U.S., or democratic ones. Thus Gus Savage, a supporter of Henry Wallace's 1948 presidential campaign, could still speak more than thirty years later of "the charismatic and brilliant Marxist-Leninist, Fidel Castro, heroic leader of Cuba's socialist revolution." Similarly, a well-known New York figure, Jitu Weusi (formerly Leslie Campbell), referring to a 1987 march protesting the killing of a black man in the Howard Beach neighborhood of Queens, said he was particularly pleased to see so many "young people out in the streets with posters of Malcolm X and Mao Zedong." Another New York figure, the Reverend Herbert Daughtry, believes that nationalism and socialism "can walk together more comfortably than nationalism and capitalism."

In fact, it is difficult to think of a more insidious combination of ideologies than state socialism and black nationalism. By teaching that poverty and inequality derive from the class nature of capitalist society, Marxism provides a ready-made rationalization for the plight of the inner city that is at heart subversive of the idea of personal responsibility and hence demoralizing to the individuals. And despite its superficial message of bootstrap enterprise, black nationalism likewise preaches a message of resignation by drumming home the theme that white racism and the subjugation of "persons of color" undergird the entire structure of American capitalism.

But as Jim Sleeper among others has pointed out, Marxism is not the only unfortunate legacy bequeathed to black America by the white Left. From civil libertarians came the idea that expelling disruptive students from the public schools was racist, as was the practice of screening applicants for public housing; the consequence was to weaken two institutions of crucial importance to the lives of poor blacks. From radical social scientists like Frances Fox Piven and Richard Cloward emerged the idea that blacks should eschew normal politics while attempting to disrupt the system through massive enrollment in the welfare system; the result was to make blacks more dependent on the state while eroding white support for the welfare safety net. From respected liberal social analysts like David Danzig came the notion that it was absurd to "hold the Negro to an extreme and outmoded doctrine of individual merit." And from radicals and liberals of all stripes came the most devastating idea of all: that society was to regard the black criminal, even the violent criminal, as a victim—of racism, poverty, bigoted police—instead of as a predatory menace to individual citizens and to the health of black neighborhoods.

ALTHOUGH there is general agreement that crime is a common factor in the deterioration of inner-city institutions—from schools to housing to public transportation to stores—there is more evasiveness and outright dishonesty among black leaders on this issue than on any other. Even those who reject the corrosive theories of white conspiracy find it difficult to accept the premise that black criminals are responsible for their actions. In response to the rape-assault of the Central Park jogger, the Reverend Daughtry could think of nothing better to do than insist that "All of us must share the blame," since "This is a violent society. We are all guilty for creating it and we all must work to eliminate it." With the exception of Mayor Dinkins, it was hard to find any black politicians, or educators, or editors, or, for that matter, clergymen willing to denounce the assailants in forthright terms. Instead, New York's leading black newspaper, the *Amsterdam News*, published account after account comparing the defendants with the Scottsboro boys (the classic case of young blacks being falsely accused of raping a white woman)—a view with which most of New York's politically active black clergy seemed to agree.

Other black leaders tend to share Daughtry's

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view that the society, and not the individual criminal, is responsible for inner-city crime. For Congressman John Conyers of Detroit, "The root of the problem is a society that economically has no use for these kids." His fellow member of the Congressional Black Caucus, Charles Rangel of New York, told a Harlem rally honoring Nelson Mandela that blacks here, like blacks in South Africa, understand what it means to be a political prisoner, citing as evidence the large percentage of young black men who have had encounters with the criminal-justice system.

There are, fortunately, other black voices, which straightforwardly identify the criminal as the chief threat to the stability of minority neighborhoods, and who dismiss the excuses for minority criminal behavior whether these emanate from white liberals, black politicians, or the criminals themselves, who often demonstrate familiarity with the latest elegant sociological rationalization for their actions.

Here, for example, is how the black writer Stanley Crouch describes his experience during a stint teaching prisoners at a facility in California:

> Every week I would hear something about political prisoners and how the black convicts were but examples of the racism of the country and the double standards in courts, what with "crime in the suites" being far less significant in terms of sentencing than "crime in the streets." Faced with this group of victims, all of whom were suffering fascist and racist repression, I once asked everyone who was innocent of the crimes for which [he was] convicted to raise [his] hand. No one did. They then went on to say that they wouldn't be there if they'd had the kind of money the rich white crooks had for better lawyers. I answered that the communities they had terrorized in one way or another were, in fact, lucky they hadn't had the money.

But blunt words like these are all too rarely encountered, and when they are encountered, the authors are too often vilified by their fellow blacks.

Even when concern is expressed about black-on-black crime, the formula phrases are often vague, ambiguous, lacking in outrage. When, for instance, a group of New York clergymen, including Sharpton and other militants, issued a statement calling attention to black-on-black crime, they singled out as causes violence on television, the absence of gun-control laws, corrupt police, a social climate which condones inner-city crime, and, in the words of the Reverend Calvin O. Butts III, "a long tradition of oppression and racism which teaches us, really, to hate ourselves." As described in the media, the ministers had not one word of opprobrium for those robbing black stores, selling drugs to black children, or killing black youths.

Another, and thoroughly depressing, aspect of the debate over the predicament of black America is the wholesale resurrection of some of the most sterile ideas and discredited movements and individuals of the past. Demands that universities establish black-studies programs have been expanded to embrace proposals for "Afrocentric" curricula in the public schools. A crude anti-Semitism, reminiscent of the anti-Jewish outbursts of the 60's, has reemerged. There is even a Black Panther militia in Milwaukee; its leader sits on the Board of Aldermen, which he uses as a forum to issue threats of violent uprisings unless massive investments are made in black neighborhoods. Meanwhile, ex-Panther notable Bobby Seale was a featured speaker at a recent Washington seminar on racism; Seale told the student audience that he was available to help plan strategy, provide bail money, or "when you need some guns." And in New York, militant demagogues who gained notoriety during racial clashes two decades ago have reappeared after years of quiescence; prominent among them is Sonny Carson, who having served a prison term for kidnapping, has returned as a Brooklyn "community organizer," and is now a leading force in the Korean store boycott.

If this recrudescent black nationalism is less overtly menacing than when H. Rap Brown and Huey Newton were leading chants of "Burn, Baby, Burn," it still stands as deeply subversive of normal black participation in American society. In the demands for Afrocentric education, with its mythical emphasis on Africa as the birthplace of civilization, one detects a mind-set which believes that blacks should regard themselves as something other than American. And the yielding to those demands represents a disturbing departure by the public schools. In the past, attempts to introduce pseudo-history into the curriculum were bitterly fought; this, in fact, was one of the issues at the heart of New York's Ocean Hill-Brownsville crisis of 1967-69. Since then, many urban school systems have gone from mainly white to mainly, or overwhelmingly, black. Under these circumstances, one can sympathize with certain unorthodox proposals for change. But one also senses a new and damaging willingness on the part of school officials to accommodate to a reduction in standards and the substitution of ideology for history.

There is also a tendency to treat black anti-Semitism less seriously than in the past. This is certainly not due to any decrease in public expressions of anti-Jewish sentiments. From Louis Farrakhan's ravings about Jewish plots to destroy black leaders to obnoxious clichés about Jewish domination of the media and entertainment industry (voiced by Spike Lee, among others), black obsession with Jewish achievements remains undiminished, even though the Jewish economic role in the inner city, previously said to be the major cause of resentment, hardly exists anymore. While not entirely ignored, the latest anti-Semitic

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outbursts have not triggered the kind of agonized debates which followed on the heels of previous incidents.

YET ANOTHER irony in this situation is that the confusion and disarray which plague the black community's racial leadership coincide with the emergence of a growing number of impressive black leaders throughout the key institutions of American society: sports, the military, journalism, education, law enforcement, politics. Of particular interest is the steady increase of black elected officials who represent majority white constituencies, a group which includes congressmen, mayors, and Governor Douglas Wilder of Virginia. That blacks now serve as mayors of such predominantly white cities as Seattle, Washington and Augusta, Maine, is a tribute both to the talent and energy of the individual politicians and to the decline of prejudice among white voters, a trend that has held steady even as urban racial tensions have worsened.

Almost universally, however, the most successful black politicians do not aspire to the mantle of race leadership, as that concept is traditionally understood. "I'm a governor who happens to be black, not a black who happens to be governor," Wilder has declared, in pointed contradistinction to Jesse Jackson's description of himself as "a black who happens to be an American." Clearly, future success in the political world requires a further broadening of the horizons of individual black politicians. At the same time, this suggests that elected officials will play a distinctly less visible role in narrowly defined racial issues than will clergymen, civil-rights officials, journalists, or academics.

Historically, of course, it was precisely the ministers, writers, teachers, and civil-rights workers who both defended blacks against racial persecution and served as the black community's authoritative voice of morality. Indeed, in the decades prior to the civil-rights revolution, preachers and editors were unapologetic in their strictures against crime, liquor, and "loose living," and the great black scholars did not shrink from subjecting Negro society to rigorous examination. By contrast, today's race leadership has largely abandoned the role of moral arbiter for a single-minded focus on the politics of racial resentment.

This is nothing less than a tragedy. For black neighborhoods will not be revived by attacking white society or through affirmative action or ten-point political programs, of either the liberal or conservative variety. The beginning of a solution will come about only when black leaders insist that the lying be stopped: about American society; about whites; about crime, work, family responsibility, and the treatment of women. Of course, moral exhortation will not by itself lift the black poor into the middle class. But unless and until the issue of values is firmly addressed within the black community itself, there is simply no possibility of beginning to grapple with the inner city's economic predicament, the source of so much righteous but misplaced rage.

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Patrick J. Buchanan and the Jews

Joshua Muravchik

ONE definition of anti-Semitism, Patrick J. Buchanan observed in his syndicated column this past September, is "an embedded hatred of Jewish people, manifest in writing and conduct, . . . a grave sin, a disease of the heart, a variant of racism." But he also gave a second definition: "a word . . . used to frighten, intimidate, censor, and silence; to cut off debate; to . . . smear men's reputations."

Buchanan complained that his name was being associated with the first meaning of the term when it ought to be associated with the second. Nevertheless he, for one, would not be intimidated: "The late Arthur Koestler, a Jew, wrote that 'one should either write ruthlessly what one believes to be the truth, or shut up.' A good motto."

The impetus for all this bravado was a column in the New York *Times* by A.M. Rosenthal accusing Buchanan of anti-Semitism and even "blood libel." Rosenthal reeled off without detail a list of particulars that had previously left him "silently contemptuous" of Buchanan. But he was moved to break his silence, he explained, by Buchanan's recent charge on the *McLaughlin Group* television show that "There are only two groups that are beating the drums . . . for war in the Middle East—the Israeli Defense Ministry and its amen corner in the United States." This, said Rosenthal, should be read: "The Jews are trying to drag us into war."

Rosenthal's accusation and Buchanan's reply stirred up a great deal of discussion. The strongest support for Rosenthal came in an unsigned piece on the editorial page of the New York *Post*, widely attributed to the editor of that page, Eric Breindel, which rebutted Buchanan's reply even as the reply itself ran on the *Post*'s op-ed page. Another *Post* editorialist, Scott McConnell, added a signed column lamenting the "dark and medieval . . . rage" behind Buchanan's words. An editorial in the *New Republic* also endorsed Rosenthal's accusation, and the Washington *Post* columnist Richard Cohen, after watching Buchanan excoriate his detractors on a subsequent television show, protested his "casual, sloppy, and conspiratorial" use of the word "they"—by which, Cohen said, he seemed to mean "the Jews."

Cohen thought that Rosenthal's was the "worst" construction of Buchanan's words; the best was that Buchanan was "insensitive." William F. Buckley, Jr., in his syndicated column, also chastised Buchanan for being insensitive, while at the same time declaring that Rosenthal had "gone ballistic" in his original attack. Jacob Weisberg, in an article in the *New Republic*, went beyond the anti-Semitism issue to argue that "Buchanan's entire world view is deeply disturbing . . . in a distinct sense, fascistic."

Another group of commentators planted themselves more firmly in the middle. As Tony Snow of the Washington *Times* saw it, "Both men have done things they shouldn't have done and said things they shouldn't have said"; he called on them to "grow up, boys." Michael Kinsley, Buchanan's partner on the TV show *Crossfire*, waffled that Buchanan's words "raise questions" but "don't provide answers." Morton Kondracke accused Buchanan (his colleague on the McLaughlin show) of having "a venomous attitude toward Israel and all of its supporters," but he later added that the charge of anti-Semitism requires "lots of proof, and Abe Rosenthal does not have the proof."

Given the fact that Buchanan is a man of the hard Right, it is ironic that his defenders tended to come mainly from the Left. On the far end was the *Nation*, which carried an article by Eric Alterman whose conclusions echoed Buchanan's own argument: "If the Rosenthal-Buchanan episode contains any lesson . . . it is that journalists need to be just as vigilant in addressing the smear of anti-Semitism as they are in seeking to expose the disease itself." Also in the *Nation*, Christopher Hitchens chimed in that "Rosenthal, Breindel, and the rest of the neocons . . . call him a Nazi because he doesn't care for the influence of Yitzhak Shamir."

On the more moderate Left, the syndicated columnist Martin Schram took issue with Buchanan's position on the gulf crisis but saw "no need to create a diversionary smoke screen, a cry of 'Racism!' in the form of 'anti-Semitism!'" And on the McLaughlin show itself, Buchanan's strongest defenders were two liberal journalists, Jack Ger-

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mond and Eleanor Clift. Germond declaimed: "There's not a scintilla of evidence in all I've known about Pat that he is anti-Semitic. . . . This is an attempt to say that if you disagree with Israel on a matter of policy you can be called-anti-Semitic." And Clift even denied that Buchanan was anti-Israel: "You don't have to be anti-Israeli to be opposed to war in the Middle East. I think Pat is an isolationist."

Ironically, too, the TV colleague whose comments most undermined the defense of Buchanan was the host of the show, John McLaughlin, who is not only ideologically close to Buchanan and a former co-worker in the Nixon White House, but whose views on the Middle East in particular are often similar to Buchanan's. Even so, when Buchanan first made his controversial remark, McLaughlin at once contradicted him by pointing out that Saudi Arabia and Egypt both wanted war against Iraq, and he repeated this on a later show when the issue was rehashed.

McLaughlin's point was hardly news: it was surely familiar to all his fellow panelists and probably to many of their viewers, for it had been reported several times. But this only highlighted the odd nature of Buchanan's charge: it was manifestly false and he must have known that it was. Israel—which had absorbed nearly unanimous international condemnation for its 1981 airstrike that aborted Iraq's nuclear-weapons program, and which Saddam Hussein had recently threatened with weapons of mass destruction—no doubt was hoping that this time the U.S. would do the job. But Israel had been maintaining a low profile, as indeed it had been urged to do by the United States in the interest of keeping the majority of Arab states aligned against Iraq. Far from beating the drums, Israel was at most merely humming along. And even to the extent that Israel and its friends were quietly hoping for war, they were, as McLaughlin reminded Buchanan, hardly the "only" ones.

In his autobiography, *Right from the Beginning*, Buchanan, recounting the numerous fistfights he had in his youth, tells us that "We loved to party and drink and fight guys we didn't know and didn't like." Then the pain of getting hit was less than the pleasure of hitting someone; now the same calculus seemed to be at work, although this time the blows were verbal. By trimming back his attack to lessen its blatant exaggeration, Buchanan would have reduced his own vulnerability, but evidently he so relished the assault he was launching against Israel and its "amen corner" that he disdained his own safety. "I don't retract a single word," he told *Time*. "The reaction was simply hysterical and is localized to New York." He could scarcely have been unaware that, used in this context, "New York" would be taken as a euphemism for "the Jews," any more than he could have been unaware earlier that the same construction would be put on the reference in his original salvo to the "amen corner."

Some commentators, however, contended that the latter phrase could be read to mean merely "Israel's supporters." But this more benign interpretation was undermined by some of Buchanan's own columns. In one, written within days of the "amen corner" remark, Buchanan named four of those he had in mind: A.M. Rosenthal; former Assistant Secretary of Defense Richard Perle; the columnist Charles Krauthammer; and former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. The Jewishness of these names contrasted with those of the American soldiers, who, in a subsequent piece, Buchanan said would do the fighting if war came to the gulf: "Kids with names like McAllister, Murphy, Gonzales, and Leroy Brown."

What was most peculiar about the four men Buchanan held forth as exemplifying the "amen corner" was that there was nothing inconsistent or out of character about their hawkish stance toward Iraq's aggression. Perle and Krauthammer were both dyed-in-the-wool hardliners on U.S. foreign policy. Rosenthal, though widely thought of as a liberal during his reign as executive editor of the *Times*, had marked himself as a hardliner ever since retiring from that post and becoming a columnist. He had, to cite but one litmus test, called it "ironic madness" that perceived opinion in the West seemed to prefer Mikhail Gorbachev over Ronald Reagan. And Kissinger, though the architect of détente while in office, had since then reclaimed his place as a leading and outspoken hawk. For these four to come down hard on Saddam Hussein required not the least consideration of Israel's interests. In an analogous situation in any other part of the world, say Latin America or East Asia, one would expect them to take a similar stand (as in fact they all had). What would demand explanation would be if any of them suddenly turned dovish.

And that precisely is the case with Buchanan himself. If a Soviet-armed, anti-American, "socialist" dictator were wiping a small, conservative, pro-American country off the map in any other part of the world, would Buchanan counsel acquiescence? Yet he, a self-proclaimed believer in "my country right or wrong," now took up the cudgels for pacifism and appeasement. In one column he lamented that "it is now almost impossible for Mr. Bush to accept a Kuwait that is either a possession, or vassal, of Iraq." In another he echoed the chant of the Vietnam-era war-resisters: "Hell no, we won't go." And he also warned that America's tough line and its military presence stood to alienate the Arab masses. Yet he himself had denounced President Jimmy Carter for "pander[ing] to [the] Organization of African Unity" by taking measures against South Africa and Rhodesia; and he had said that "America's stated goal in Central America should be the triumph of the Monroe Doctrine," an approach

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that even hawkish Latin Americanists acknowledge would touch a raw nerve in the hemisphere. What was it about Arab mass opinion that made it so much more important to Buchanan than that of Africa or Latin America? Surely the real question was not whether Perle and the others were hawks on the gulf crisis just because of their attachment to Israel, but whether Buchanan was a dove on the gulf crisis just because of his animus against Israel.

In his reply to Rosenthal, Buchanan allowed that "yes, a change has taken place" in his attitude toward Israel as compared with the time "from June of '67 . . . until I went back in the White House in 1985 [when] I was an uncritical apologist for Israel." This bit of personal history does not stand up to scrutiny. It is true that in earlier years Buchanan had produced columns friendly to Israel, but he was certainly never "an uncritical apologist."

Thus, in 1976, when the Ford administration proposed for the first time in decades to sell arms to Egypt, which had not yet made peace with Israel, and many of Israel's supporters protested, Buchanan urged Congress not to "harken . . . to the counsel of the Jewish lobby and its Washington representative, Henry Jackson." Later that year, when the disgraced former Vice President Spiro Agnew published a novel widely denounced for portraying Congress as beholden to a Zionist cabal, Buchanan commented that the Jewish community had "overreacted—badly . . . to be anti-Israeli . . . is [not] to be anti-Semitic." In 1977, when President Carter endorsed legislation against the Arab boycott of Israel, Buchanan objected and moreover warned that Americans who lost their jobs as a result would blame Israel.

Today, Buchanan claims that he was "a Begin man all the way, defending everything from the attack on the Iraqi reactor to the invasion of Lebanon." But in 1979 he asserted that Begin's "prickly personality," among other things, had "raised in the minds of many Americans the question of whether continued unconditional support of Israel serves the national interest of the United States." And he went on to quote Senator Jesse Helms: "So that Mr. Begin can continue his settlement program . . . the American economy is suffering damage, the American motorist is standing in gas lines, the world is running the risk of major war, and the world financial structure and millions of jobs are in jeopardy." Senator Helms, Buchanan declared, "did not speak for himself alone."*

Three months later Buchanan declared that to Middle America

> Sadat appears to be the man of peace and compromise, while Begin seems the intransigent bent upon settling and seizing forever the West Bank. Others, disenchanted with the results of foreign assistance, ask how long taxpayers must subsidize Israel with annual billions in economic and military assistance. Others ask why the United States is siding with three million Israelis—instead of 100 million Arabs who have oil.

Still later in 1979, John Connally, then a presidential aspirant, unveiled a Middle East peace plan calling for Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank, Gaza, and the Golan without negotiation, and for the creation of a Palestinian state which would share sovereignty over Jerusalem with Israel. This plan positioned Connally as the least sympathetic to Israel of all the 1980 presidential candidates and was denounced by Israel's supporters. But Buchanan published a column taking Jewish groups to task for rebuffing "Connally's efforts to sit down and talk turkey with Israel and Israel's friends on those legitimate questions."

Finally, in 1982, when Lebanese Christian forces slaughtered several hundred Palestinians in Beirut's Sabra and Shatila refugee camps, Buchanan dubbed this the "Rosh Hashanah massacre" and said that "the Israeli army is looking toward a blackening of its name to rival what happened to the French army in the Dreyfus Affair."

Perhaps none of these stands warrants the appellation "anti-Israel," but still less do they show Buchanan to have been "a Begin man all the way," let alone an "uncritical apologist for Israel." In any event, by his own account, Buchanan has in recent years grown still less uncritical: "When Israel was created . . . one great wrong was righted; but another great wrong was done—to the Palestinian people. The bill has come due." He seems to forget that when Israel was created a Palestinian state was created, too, and that it was aborted not by the creation of Israel but by the refusal of the Arabs to go along with the two-state solution—a refusal that took the form of their unsuccessful 1948 war to destroy Israel. In that war many Arabs fled Palestine. The reason, according to Buchanan, was Deir Yassin, the site of a wartime atrocity by Jewish extremists much publicized by Arab spokesmen, but in accounts of less biased historians an incident that ranks fairly low on the list of reasons for the flight.

Buchanan has also embraced the Palestinian *intifada* which "will be recorded in [the] history [of a coming Palestinian state] like the 'Boston Massacre' of 1770. . . . This time, the Palestinians did it right. . . ." He has chided Congress for not addressing Israeli human-rights abuses in suppressing the *intifada*, a complaint that comports oddly with his vociferous defense in the past of the regimes of Pinochet, Franco, and Vorster. He declares that the Palestinians have a "God-given right to a homeland"

* Since those days, Jesse Helms has become a strong supporter of Israel.

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and that "If America stands for anything in this world, it is the right of peoples everywhere to determine their own destiny." Yet when it comes to South Africa, he rebuts those who believe that "White rule of a Black majority is inherently wrong":

> But where did we get that idea? The Founding Fathers did not believe this. They did not give the Indians . . . the right to vote us out of North America. When they created the republic, they restricted the franchise to property-owning males, believing that not every man was qualified to rule, nor every people prepared for self-government.
>
> If the past thirty years taught us nothing else, it has surely taught us that.
>
> To elevate "majority rule" to the level of divine revelation is a heresy of the American idea.

The political philosophy of the African National Congress (ANC) makes Buchanan doubly afraid of majority rule in South Africa, but he seems to have overcome similar qualms about the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). "Yasir Arafat," Buchanan has announced, "has decided, at this stage of his life, that he wants to be the David Ben-Gurion of an independent Palestine; he wants to be the first president of the Palestinian state . . . [he] wants history to say of him that he was father to the revolution, and father to the nation." Accordingly, when the PLO attempted to land five speedboats on Israeli beaches last spring in order to massacre Jewish bathers, Buchanan was moved to sympathy with Arafat's dilemma: "Should he denounce it, only days after Israel brutally crushed a resurgent *intifada*, Mr. Arafat would appear both an appeaser and a weak leader."

As with his stand on Iraq, Buchanan's positions on the PLO and the *intifada* are totally out of character. After all, the PLO's closest comrades are such groups as the ANC and the Sandinistas, who have no fiercer enemy in America than Buchanan. Apparently, however, his animus against Israel is great enough even to outweigh his hatred of Communist-style "national-liberation" movements.

Back in 1979, Buchanan wrote a column that aptly summarized the central dilemma of the Arab-Israel conflict:

> Like every other people, the Palestinians want their own nation. . . . But if the Palestinians do achieve nationhood . . . will they not, as the first national priority, set about to rectify what they believe is the historic injustice of bringing into the Middle East a million European Jews . . . to occupy land that belonged to Palestinians for a thousand years?

At that time Buchanan had no answer to this question. Today, he recognizes that the dilemma remains, but now he is nevertheless ready to push Israel into accepting a Palestinian state. Will the Palestinians be willing to live in peace within their own new mini-state, he asks, or will they say: "This time we settle for something, in order that tomorrow we come back and get everything"? To which he replies airily: "History has determined that we are going to find out." Elsewhere he adds: "The Palestinian-Jewish conflict . . . is an historic tragedy yet to unfold." Though Buchanan is far from being Israel's most vituperative American critic, this detached indifference to the acknowledged prospect of Israel's destruction is in a way more chilling than the fulminations of radical screwballs who honestly believe that the PLO is devoted to peace, democracy, and secularism.

In the meantime, Buchanan pounds away at the alleged conflict between Israel's interests and America's. He denounces the Democratic party as the "diapered poodle of . . . the Israeli lobby," he calls for an "American lobby," and he quips that Capitol Hill is "Israeli-occupied territory." When Abraham Foxman of the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) protests, Buchanan responds, "C'mon, Abe, lighten up." In this response he seemed to be seconding those of his defenders who claim that Buchanan is easily misinterpreted because of his penchant for rhetorical drama and excess. That may be, but he has another rhetorical penchant, and that is for tweaking Jews or invoking them in arguments or situations to which they have no apparent relevance.

For example, in addition to the swipe about Capitol Hill, Buchanan said of the Sabra and Shatila massacres and of the trial of the accused (and convicted) Nazi war criminal John Demjanjuk that each was "another Dreyfus case," although the parallels are hard to see. Calling those Beirut killings the "Rosh Hashanah massacre" was a play on the "Yom Kippur War" and it insinuated a central Israeli role in vicious acts in which Israel was only an unwitting accomplice. Writing of the Vietnamese "boat people," he exclaimed: "Can one imagine what a cauldron of boiling rage the Senate would be if—instead of Vietnamese—there were Jews in those boats . . . ?" (Is it not strange to write such a sentence without so much as mentioning that only thirty years earlier there were Jews in boats and the Senate was even more indifferent?) Protesting the blasphemous film, *The Last Temptation of Christ*, Buchanan demanded: "Would [Jack] Valenti employ his eloquence to defend a film portraying Anne Frank as an oversexed teenager fantasizing at Auschwitz on romancing some SS guards?" Then a few weeks later, lambasting the New York *Times* for not criticizing the same film strongly enough, he sneered: "We have a 'newspaper of record' that can sniff out anti-Semitism in some guy turning down a kosher hot dog at the ballpark." He got on the *Times* once more when a group of homosexuals and advocates of abortion

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rights disrupted a mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York. The *Times* denounced the demonstrators in an editorial but again the words were not strong enough, and Buchanan taunted: "Had a synagogue been so desecrated, would the *Times* have been so restrained?"

Buchanan has revisited this incident in his denunciation of Congress for passing legislation in 1990 that directs the federal government to keep statistics on "hate crimes." In promoting his newsletter, *Patrick J. Buchanan . . . From the Right* (and, some say, planning a run for President in 1992), Buchanan is now promising to "set forth a new agenda of compelling issues." Second on his list, just below abortion and above national defense, is this:

> "Hate Crimes." Why is painting swastikas on a temple considered a hate crime, while the desecration of the host at St. Patrick's cathedral by a rabid group of sodomites is not?

But the implication here that laws against hate crimes favor Jews over Catholics is false. The laws refer to all ethnic and religious groups: painting anti-Catholic slogans on a church would qualify just as much as painting swastikas on a synagogue. In fact, in recent years, some such crimes aimed at mosques have been duly recorded. On the other hand, disrupting religious services for purposes of protest, although obnoxious, falls on the borderline of the definition of hate crime and the police must decide how to classify it. This is equally true whether the worship disrupted is Jewish, Christian, Muslim, or anything else.

Taken cumulatively, Buchanan's rhetoric about Jews pretty clearly betrays an underlying sense of grievance or irritation. This irritation rose to a fever in the controversy over the protests by a number of Jewish organizations against the placement of a Carmelite convent at Auschwitz. The New York *Post*'s Scott McConnell spoke for many when he wrote:

> I admit to a lack of certainty over where the Carmelite nuns should actually end up. But . . . the convent question seemed in good hands—that is, the hands of leaders from both faiths who took as a given the desirability of harmonious relations between Catholics and Jews. . . . I would have favored *whatever* agreement they arrived at.

Alas, it was not only good hands that touched this issue—on both sides. Cardinal Glemp, the primate of Poland, delivered himself of some remarks about Jewish control of the international news media that it would be hard not to characterize as anti-Semitic, and Rabbi Avraham Weiss led a small band of followers from New York to the convent for a noisome demonstration. But the one who seemed most to welcome intercommunal warfare was Buchanan. "The slumbering giant of Catholicism may be about to awaken," he intoned. "When Cardinal John O'Connor . . . declares this 'is not a fight between Catholics and Jews,' he speaks for himself. Be not afraid, your eminence; just step aside, there are bishops and priests ready to assume the role of defender of the faith."

BUCHANAN'S irritation with the Jewish community also was evident during the dispute that arose (when he was working in the White House) over President Reagan's visit to the cemetery at Bitburg after it was revealed that members of the SS were buried there. According to *U.S. News & World Report*, "Fellow White House aides blanched when Communications Director Patrick Buchanan bluntly urged Jewish leaders visiting the White House to 'be good Americans' and stop protesting Reagan's cemetery stop." And according to the Washington *Post*, Buchanan was "credited . . . with the President's characterization of World War II German soldiers and SS troops as 'victims' of the Nazis 'just as surely as the victims in concentration camps.'"

This is far from the only item of German history on which Buchanan holds distinctive views. In his autobiography, he cites approvingly his father's opinion that "lying British propaganda about the 'bayoneting of Belgian babies' had gotten tens of thousands of American boys killed in a war with the Kaiser's Germany we had no business fighting." In recent columns, he returns to that theme. In one, he derides "the Wilsonian gobbledygook we followed into the trenches of World War I—when, all the time, the hidden agenda was to pull Britain's chestnuts out of the fire." This is a jaundiced interpretation for someone who presents himself as an ardent patriot, and it is made odder still by the notion—developed in another column—that Britain was the aggressor in World War I:

> In 1914, [the British] empire, at its peak of power and prestige, was challenged by Germany in the ruthless but peaceful competition of industry and trade. Since Bismarck's victory over Napoleon III in 1871, Berlin had become dominant on the continent; its margin of power was growing. Hence, Britain sought a way to cut it down.
>
> It came in 1914, when gunmen in a Serbian conspiracy—in which Belgrade was complicit—murdered the heir to Austria's throne. . . . Seeking a *casus belli*, Britain found it in an 1839 treaty whereby she had guaranteed Belgium's neutrality.

But Germany's challenge to Britain was not merely a matter of "peaceful competition." It included a naval-armaments race that threatened the maritime supremacy which was Britain's answer to Germany's land forces; an increasingly assertive claim for a larger share of colonial holdings; and a growing propensity to resort to the threat of arms in inter-European rivalries. Still, Britain had no intention of attacking Germany. Its policy, as always, was to counterbalance Ger-

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many by means of alliance and diplomacy, as well as by accelerated production of warships. The mainstream view of historians is that to the extent Britain contributed to the onset of hostilities, it was not by seeking war, but through an aversion to war, which tempted the Germans to act more belligerently than they might otherwise have done. In the end, Germany's invasion of Belgium brought an abrupt end to British vacillation. For far from the obscurity that Buchanan attributes to it, the 1839 treaty was a vital matter of honor and legal obligation for Britain and the emblem of its balance-of-power policy toward the continent.

The revisionist history of World War I on which Buchanan draws here enjoyed a vogue in America and England between the wars. After World War II it went into eclipse because the policies of isolationism and appeasement it had fed and encouraged had proved so calamitous, and because it was now harder to view Germany in a benign light. A few of the old revisionists, however, stuck to their guns and even went on to offer revisionist accounts of World War II. Buchanan sometimes seems to head in this direction, too. Thus, in 1977 he wrote:

> Those of us in childhood during the war years were introduced to Hitler only as caricature. . . . Though Hitler was indeed racist and anti-Semitic to the core, a man who without compunction could commit murder and genocide, he was also an individual of great courage, a soldier's soldier in the Great War, a political organizer of the first rank, a leader steeped in the history of Europe, who possessed oratorical powers that could awe even those who despised him.

Buchanan echoed this disturbingly respectful tone in a recent column ridiculing comparisons of Saddam Hussein to Hitler.

LIKE the World War II revisionists as well, Buchanan decries those who ascribe to the German people any guilt whatsoever for Hitler. He points out that several other nations have fallen prey to totalitarianism and invokes an essay by the political scientist Kurt Glaser arguing that "Totalitarianism is an endemic disease of modern society, the germs of which are present in every country and . . . become virulent in times of national crisis." But this argument skips over Hitler's manifest prewar popularity and the fact that, although he had not won a majority, he, unlike any other totalitarian ruler, acceded to power through the unimpeded constitutional mechanisms of a democratic republic.

It is interesting that Buchanan should invoke Glaser on this issue. For President Reagan's description of the SS members buried at Bitburg as victims recalled Glaser's formula that "The German people as a whole . . . was the first victim of National Socialism." But while Buchanan cites Glaser approvingly and at length, he does not divulge whether he accepts the main thesis of Glaser's essay, which is that

> Both sides [in World War II] offended against freedom and the dignity of man; both sides forgot the strategy of prudence and let themselves be swept to disaster by the passions of war. . . . It is absurd to maintain that Germany has a particular obligation, not shared by the other nations of Europe, to make special sacrifices in the liquidation of World War II.

We cannot assume from his silence that Buchanan concurs with Glaser. Still, most writers when invoking the authority of an essay whose main point they reject usually include some kind of qualifier in their citation. Moreover, Buchanan has dropped several hints that he does believe something along the lines of Glaser's thesis. He has debunked the Nuremberg war-crimes trials, and he charges falsely that "terror bombing had a British patrimony. . . . When Goering turned his bombers loose on London in September 1940, the British had been terror-bombing since May 11." (In fact, although the allies eventually bombed out whole cities, RAF bombing in this early phase aimed at industrial targets—with little effect.) He has also written that "the greatest enemy of the Russian peoples was never in Berlin, but in Moscow." And he devoted still another column early in 1990 to publicizing *Other Losses*, a book by one James Bacque, published in Canada, which alleges that one million German POW's died in Americans camps at the end of the war, deliberately and vindictively denied food, shelter, and water—all because of General Dwight D. Eisenhower's supposedly fanatical hatred of Germans. Buchanan even went so far as to quote someone saying that "the U.S. camps reminded him of Dachau and Buchenwald."

Other Losses was so shoddy that it found no American publisher, and the normally circumspect U.S. Army Office of Military History commented that it "belongs in the *National Enquirer*, not on a reputable history book list." For his part, Buchanan tried to bolster the book by quoting Eisenhower's biographer, Stephen E. Ambrose, who "calls the revelations [in *Other Losses*] a 'major historical discovery.'" But what Ambrose actually said was this:

> [Bacque] has made an important discovery—there *is* an untold story about the suffering of German prisoners after the war ended. [But] he has completely misunderstood Ike's policies, problems, and performance . . . . Everyone except Allied troops suffered horribly in Europe in the aftermath of the war. Ike did not cause these conditions—he was trying to correct them.

As for the number of deaths, Ambrose estimated that they totaled not a million but "more like 200,000, perhaps even less." Yet even this appal-

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ling figure did not support the Bacque-Buchanan imputation of an American atrocity. Suddenly at war's end, the Americans found themselves with 5.2 million German POW's—many of them over-aged conscripts, many sick or wounded, many physically drained from the trek to reach American, rather than Russian, lines. In addition, there were some 10 million German civilian refugees from the East and 4-5 million other displaced persons. During the last months of fighting and the initial months after the surrender, these numbers—not to mention the priority rightly given to the civilian victims of German policy over the remnants of the German army—simply overwhelmed the available supplies of food, shelter, and medicine.

The reunification of Germany provoked anxiety in many capitals, leading to demands that Germany formally accept its postwar borders. Once again Buchanan's pro-German sympathies were aroused, and he applauded Chancellor Helmut Kohl as a "patriot" for his "reluctance to sign away all rights to the lost German territories." He also urged that U.S. policy "permit the German people a worldwide hearing for their case" for redrawing their Eastern border.

Because of his name, Buchanan is often taken for Irish. He is, however, more German than anything else. His father, he tells us in his autobiography, is half Irish and half Scotch-Irish; his mother's lineage is German on both sides. There is, then, something of the pot calling the kettle black in his insinuations that American Jews put Israel's interests first, when, in order to cast Germany in a more sympathetic light, he so freely accuses Dwight D. Eisenhower of crimes against German prisoners and impugns Woodrow Wilson's motives.

But the most egregious feature of Buchanan's penchant for revisionism has been his defense of Nazi war criminals. Challenging the rationale for the Justice Department's Office of Special Investigations (OSI), which pursues war criminals, he once asked: "You've got a great atrocity that occurred 35, 45 years ago. . . . Why . . . put millions of dollars [into] investigating that?" When word of Kurt Waldheim's complicity in wartime atrocities came out, Buchanan complained that "the ostracism of President Waldheim [has] an aspect of moral bullying and the singular stench of selective indignation." (Evidently it took these revelations to make Buchanan sympathetic to Waldheim, since as UN Secretary General, Waldheim had been a whipping boy of Buchanan's.)

Worse yet, when the American government apologized to France for sheltering Klaus Barbie, the "butcher of Lyons," Buchanan protested: "To what end, all this wallowing in the atrocities of a dead regime when there is scarcely a peep of protest over . . . the concentration camps operating now in China and Siberia, in Cuba, and South Vietnam." Moreover, while serving in the Reagan White House, Buchanan appealed to Attorney General Meese to block the deportation of Karl Linnas to the Soviet Union where he faced death for his war crimes. There is of course no justice in Soviet justice, but neither was there any doubt about Linnas's guilt or the nature of his crimes. In upholding Linnas's deportation, the United States Court of Appeals ruled:

> The evidence presented at Linnas's denaturalization trial . . . was overwhelming and largely uncontroverted. The government presented eyewitness testimony that Linnas was chief of the Nazi concentration camp in Tartu, Estonia. . . .
>
> Eyewitnesses testified that Linnas supervised the transportation of prisoners from his camp to a nearby antitank ditch. On such occasions innocent Jewish women and children were tied by their hands and brought in their underwear to the edge of the ditch where they were forced to kneel. The guards then opened fire. . . .
>
> There was also eyewitness testimony that Linnas on at least one occasion announced his victims' death sentence . . . and gave the order to fire. Linnas was also said to have then personally approached the edge of the ditch, and fired into it. . . .
>
> The foundation of Linnas's due-process argument is an appeal to the court's sense of decency and compassion. Noble words such as "decency" and "compassion" ring hollow when spoken by a man who ordered the extermination of innocent men, women, and children kneeling at the edge of a mass grave. Karl Linnas's appeal to humanity . . . truly offends this court's sense of decency.

After the courts had thus turned this man away in disgust, Buchanan made himself his defender.

Another case that Buchanan has championed is that of Arthur Rudolph, who supervised the production of Hitler's V-2 rockets and then, finding refuge in the United States after the war, contributed to America's space program. The Mittelwerk rocket factory directed by Rudolph operated with slave labor from the Buchenwald and Nordhausen concentration camps. Albert Speer recorded in his diary that, after a visit to the plant, "Some of the men were so affected that they had to be forcibly sent off on vacations to restore their nerves." There were frequent hangings (using a specially drawn-out method) of the slave laborers for suspected sabotage, and the workforce was compelled to watch. There is evidence that Rudolph shared responsibility for the atrocious conditions and that he was present at some of the hangings. There is also some evidence that Rudolph may have been the one to finger suspected saboteurs. And there is even one document which seems to show that the very idea of using slave labor for the V-2 workforce originated with Rudolph.

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Confronted with the evidence against him, especially his own admissions in sworn interrogations, Rudolph voluntarily signed an agreement with the Justice Department acknowledging some culpability and relinquishing his citizenship. Buchanan argues that Rudolph's admission was a "lie" which he agreed to tell only to prevent OSI from going after his wife and daughter. But OSI denies this, pointing out that it has never taken action against the family members of any of its targets. Buchanan also claims that prosecutors in West Germany, where Rudolph now resides, "found OSI's case to be a cruel joke." But they found only that the evidence was not sufficient to sustain the one charge on which their statute of limitations had not expired: murder with a "base motive."

Buchanan acknowledges that Rudolph was "a nominal member of the Nazi party, and of the SA until 1934," and likens him to Andrei Sakharov on the ground that slave labor was used in the Soviet nuclear-weapons program on which Sakharov worked. But Rudolph joined the Nazi party years before Hitler took power, a *prima facie* demarcation line between true believers and careerists. And the SA (which he also joined before Hitler's accession) were the stormtroopers who bludgeoned Hitler's opponents. What can it mean to have been a "nominal member"?

The case on which Buchanan has lavished his most sustained and passionate attention is that of John Demjanjuk. Buchanan has devoted at least seven columns to Demjanjuk's defense, asserting with increasing assurance that he is not the notorious Ivan the Terrible of the Treblinka death camp and declaring that "We [meaning the United States and Israel] are the Salem judges of our own time." Buchanan has flatly declared the testimony against Demjanjuk to be "perjured" and a vital piece of evidence to be "a palpably forged identification card produced by the KGB." It is, to be sure, easy to believe the KGB guilty of forgery, but the card has been examined by experts for both the American and Israeli governments who deem it authentic. Buchanan, meanwhile, makes his bold assertion having seen only a photostat.

The issues that Buchanan lays out in his columns have been presented in court both in America and in Israel and none as yet has been found to have merit. Indeed, because of the complexities of denaturalization and extradition, the case has been before fourteen different tribunals in America and none has bought Demjanjuk's (and Buchanan's) claim that a miscarriage of justice has occurred.

Buchanan began his defense of Demjanjuk in 1983 by arguing that it was a case of mistaken identity, and that the accused was not Ivan. By 1987 Buchanan reported that he had read various original sources about Treblinka and "No one even mentions an Ivan the Terrible," leading him to conclude that "Ivan" was probably not a real person, but "a composite" of several. By 1990, he went a fateful step further, declaring that diesel engines, the exhaust from which was used in the Treblinka gas chambers, "do not emit enough carbon monoxide to kill anybody. . . . Demjanjuk's weapon of mass murder cannot kill."

Buchanan's evidence for this technical point is a 1988 incident that occurred in an Amtrak train in Washington which stalled in a tunnel, exposing the occupants to the exhaust from its diesel engine. None died. But the conditions were not comparable to a gas chamber: the engines ran for only a few minutes and the tunnel allowed some ventilation. Knowledgeable authorities laugh at the idea that diesel exhaust could not be lethal in a sealed chamber. Those packed inside could have died either from poisoning or just from asphyxiation as the exhaust drove out the oxygen.

There are other, even darker, implications in this strange point of Buchanan's. In his crusade to defend Demjanjuk, Buchanan has lent his own imprimatur to a preposterous theory that came out of the school of "Holocaust revisionists," a tiny but organized movement which constitutes one channel of the fever swamps of the neo-Nazi/white-supremacist camp. Nor is this the only time Buchanan has borrowed from such sources. He has also delivered himself of the following words:

> Since the war, 1,600 medical papers have been written on "The Psychological and Medical Effects of the Concentration Camps on Holocaust Survivors." This so-called "Holocaust Survivor Syndrome" involves "group fantasies of martyrdom and heroics."

What can Buchanan possibly be talking about here? Can he furnish a bibliography of, say, the first hundred of these "1,600 medical papers"? And do quotation marks diminish the sewer-level bigotry of the reference to "fantasies of martyrdom"?

Taken together, Buchanan's forays into the subject of diesel exhaust and "Holocaust Survivor Syndrome" carry him perilously close to the Holocaust revisionists. Diesel exhaust fumes were used not only at Treblinka but also at Chelmno, Sobibor, and Belzec, and were moreover employed extensively by the Nazi killing squads (*Einsatzgruppen*) inside the USSR. If such fumes cannot kill, then a good part of what has generally been accepted as having happened to the Jews at the hands of the Nazis cannot have happened. And if the testimony of survivors is inherently unreliable because of a "syndrome" that manifests itself in "fantasies," then much that we think we know may not be true. At a minimum, the implication is that the toll of the Holocaust may be vastly exaggerated. Perhaps the real number of those who perished is not that much greater than the

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number of German POW's that Buchanan seems to believe were exterminated by Eisenhower.

WHEN I first spotted one or two of Buchanan's pointed comments about Jews, I imagined that, given his staunchly conservative views, this was just an expression of annoyance at the heavy representation of Jews in liberal causes and the predominant liberalism of the Jewish community. After all, Buchanan had complained (just as I myself had done) about liberals who seemed more willing to fund Israel's defense needs than America's.

But this explanation will not suffice. What conservative rationale can there be for defending Nazis or flirting with the worst elements of the radical Right? And now, in his fight with the Jews, Buchanan has not even hesitated to embrace the radical Left as well. Thus, not only did he quote the *Nation* in blackening A.M. Rosenthal's name, but he also declared that "decent and honorable men, Left as well as Right, [have] had careers damaged and reputations smeared" by the accusation of anti-Semitism. Buchanan has not replied to my letters asking whom on the Left he had in mind, but in recent times public charges of anti-Semitism have been made in a sustained way against only two figures on the Left, Jesse Jackson and Gore Vidal. What can move Buchanan to such tenderness toward the likes of these two who, the Jewish question aside, represent everything he despises?

In one of the McLaughlin programs that rehashed the controversy, Buchanan tried to argue that his litany of those seeking war in the gulf consisted of Jewish names merely because his debate was with the "neoconservatives," many of whom are Jewish. But why is Buchanan spoiling for a fight with the neoconservatives? The alliance between them and traditional conservatives like him has been based largely on foreign policy, which he himself says is the most important of all issues. And although the collapse of Soviet power heralds a new era in foreign policy, Buchanan remains at one with many neoconservatives in believing that Communism—their common foe—is not yet finished. Is Buchanan attacking Jews, then, because they happen to be neoconservatives, or is he attacking neoconservatives because they happen to be Jews?

Both the New York *Post* editorialist and Jacob Weisberg in his article in the *New Republic* said that they did not want to get into a "semantic" squabble over "anti-Semitism," and indeed there may be no authoritative definition of the term. But when a man falsely maintains that he is the victim of a "preplanned orchestrated smear campaign" by the Anti-Defamation League; when he is hostile to Israel; when he embraces the PLO despite being at adamant odds with its political philosophy; when he implies that Jews are trying to drag America into war for the sake of Israel; when he sprinkles his columns with taunting remarks about things Jewish; when he stirs the pot of intercommunal hostility; when he rallies to the defense of Nazi war criminals, not only those who protest their innocence but also those who confess their guilt; when he implies that the generally accepted interpretation of the Holocaust might be a serious exaggeration—when a man does all these things, surely it is reasonable to conclude that his actions make a fairly good match for the first, not the second, of Patrick J. Buchanan's two definitions of anti-Semitism.

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The Wave of the Past

Mark Falcoff

ONE OF the more interesting side-effects of the crisis of Communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union has been the discredit into which the socialist idea has suddenly fallen in what used to be called the Third World. It was in *these* countries, after all—Algeria, Guinea, Cuba, Sri Lanka—that the socialist model of development, as embodied first and foremost in the Soviet Union itself, was supposed to have particular relevance, since (we were often told) in less than two generations it had transformed the semi-Asiatic peasant society of Russia into a global superpower. For non-Western countries, or, rather, for the leaders of their successful anti-colonial movements, the Bolshevik Revolution was therefore not merely an episode in the history of an individual European country, but a new chapter in the evolution of mankind.

Of course, one of the things which made the socialist model so compelling in the years since World War II was precisely the fact that it was endorsed (for non-Western countries) by a liberal "development establishment" in Western Europe and the United States. It was the advanced West—prosperous, well-ordered, and decidedly non-socialist—which devised most of the post-colonial prescriptions for the "developing" countries, and dispensed them through international agencies, foundations, and study groups which they also generally funded and staffed, and to some extent still do.

Between 1945 and 1965 the principal ideologists of this movement were Western Europeans—René Dumont and Claude Julien in France, Joan Robinson and Dudley Seers in Britain, Gunnar Myrdal in Sweden. For quite a time American culture remained remarkably resistant to this kind of revolutionary romanticism; it was, in fact, one of the things which visiting European intellectuals found most provincial and troubling about us. But by 1968, the war in Vietnam had provoked a drastic intellectual sea-change and virtually the entire American foreign-policy establishment surrendered to what might be called the European consensus on the Third World.

A key signpost was a shift in the frame of reference and even the language in which Third World issues now came to be discussed in the United States. Although no single book can claim to have changed American thinking about these matters, one in particular—published, as it happens, during the heady revolutionary days of 1968—became the prototype of an entire genre that exercised a decisive influence on a generation of journalists, academics, clergy, and "development" specialists. The book in question was *Struggle Against History: United States Foreign Policy in an Age of Revolution.** Essentially a collection of papers from an academic conference held at Michigan State University, it was introduced by no less a personage than Arnold J. Toynbee and was dedicated "to the 70 percent of the people of the world who live in the underdeveloped areas of Asia, Africa, and Latin America—to the people who bear the burden of what has come to be called the 'American Century.' "

THE nineteen chapters of *Struggle Against History* did not pretend to offer a synoptic view of their subject. Rather, the book combined in a rather disorganized fashion three basic outlooks—Marxian notions of imperialism, liberal Protestant pietism, and anti-Americanism. Sometimes these perspectives overlapped, sometimes not. In this way, the volume foreshadowed much of current American liberal thinking on Third World issues, which is typically satisfied to collate (in no particular order) sentimentality, self-hatred, and false statistics.

While some of the authors of *Struggle Against History* frankly avowed that Communism was the only solution for the Third World, others, like Toynbee in his introduction, simply believed that underdeveloped countries, to the extent that they freed themselves from American influence, were bound to find an authentic and better road to national development. Still others seemed to use

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* Edited by N.D. Houghton, Washington Square Press. The paperback edition was published by Clarion (Simon & Schuster).

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the occasion to criticize certain aspects of American culture and public life, of which they saw our foreign policy as nothing more than a particularly obnoxious extension. And one author, William Appleman Williams, the late dean of American revisionist (New Left) historians, could not quite decide if the alleged U.S. thrust for global hegemony responded to deep-seated moral and cultural drives or to the imperatives of our political and economic system.

But the book's centerpiece, and the essay that established the tone and content of more than half the chapters, was by the American economist Robert Heilbroner.* This piece boldly asserted that only some form of "National Collectivism or Communism" would ignite the development revolution which the more backward peoples of the Third World required. What made Heilbroner's argument particularly powerful was his frank admission that the human cost of such systems would be "horrendous"—yet, he insisted, there was no other way for many countries to avoid mass starvation and chaos:

> If Communism is the great modernizer, it is certainly not a benign agent of change. . . . Yet one must count the gains as well as the losses. Hundreds of millions who would have been confined to the narrow cells of changeless lives have been liberated from prisons they did not even know existed. . . . Economic systems that gave rise to luxury and poverty have given way to systems that provide a rough distributional justice. Above all, the prospect of a new future has been opened.

For Heilbroner, the basic tension in the world was not, in fact, between Communist and non-Communist nations at all, but between "wealth and poverty, rich nations and poor nations." To the extent that Communist countries succeeded in their war against backwardness, he suggested, they would become less dangerous to the West. But even if they did not, they would still constitute no real threat to the West. Moreover, were the United States to resist this onward trend of history, it would be confronted with the necessity of fighting repeated Vietnams. And even if it succeeded in its objective of preventing or containing such revolutions, the result would be "eventual human catastrophe on an unimaginable scale," since the failure to modernize would then lead to overpopulation and mass starvation.

Americans, Heilbroner concluded, needed to recognize that "Communism, which may indeed represent a retrogressive movement in the West, where it should continue to be resisted with full energies, may nonetheless represent a progressive movement in the backward areas, where its advent may be the only chance these areas have of escaping misery." What followed from this, for those with the honesty and the courage to face the facts, was "a more isolationist policy for the United States vis-à-vis the developing continents, and a greater willingness to permit revolutions there to work their way without our influence."

THE argument was audacious to a fault, even as it rested upon monumental presumptions about not only the economic success of Communism in the Soviet Union, China, Cuba, and Vietnam (the principal exemplars of the era in which Heilbroner was writing) but also the failure of capitalism everywhere outside Western Europe and the United States. In these presumptions, however, Heilbroner was at one with most of his fellow contributors to *Struggle Against History*, for all made their case largely by comparing the alleged accomplishments of Communism with the evident failures of other models of development in the Third World.

A particularly pointed example concerned the comparative performances of China and India, discussed in a clever chapter by the Cambridge economist Joan Robinson. The terms of the comparison allowed for no equivocation: for Robinson, the Chinese economy was on the road to equality, the Indian economy on the road away from it. Moreover, in China ("for the time being") food supplies were running ahead of the population; the contrast with India "needs no elaboration." The secret of China's success was its preference for a command as opposed to a market economy, as well as the priority it gave to heavy over light industry—precisely the inverse of the case of India.

A somewhat similar contrast, this time between North and South Korea, was offered by the Canadian political scientist C.S. Burchill. According to him, in 1963 the Communist North as compared with the non-Communist South was producing on a per-capita basis "twice the tonnage of food grains, three times the tonnage of fish, four times the yardage of cloth, four times the tonnage of coal, eight times the output of cement, twelve times as much electrical power, and fourteen times the tonnage of steel." One might have thought that these figures (if accurate, which they almost certainly were not) could be at least partly explained by the fact that prior to partition in 1945, the northern half of Korea possessed most of the country's existing industrial plant. But Burchill, throwing caution to the winds, affirmed simply that "North Korea seems to have solved the problem of freedom from want more satisfactorily than the free Republic of Korea."

North Korea also had the good fortune, Burchill argued, to be exempt from the kind of political manipulation to which the South was subjected by the United States. Indeed, for him this might even explain its economic success better than any

* Under the title "Counterrevolutionary America," this chapter originally appeared in COMMENTARY (April 1967) as part of a three-sided debate on "The Effects of American Intervention."

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intrinsic superiority of the Communist system. Joan Robinson put the same idea in a superficially more rigorous fashion:

> It is obvious enough that the United States's crusade against Communism is a campaign against development. . . . In those countries whose governments have been prepared to accept American support, "aid" is given in a form which may do more to inhibit development than to promote it. . . . America seems bent on terrorizing any people who start to find a way onto the path [of development], to head them off it.

That U.S. policy toward the Third World was motivated by a singleminded war against "development" was also the theme of N.B. Miller, the pseudonym of "a political scientist . . . in close contact with [leaders] in the struggle against imperialism." For him, this "fact" explained U.S. military intervention in "Guatemala, the Dominican Republic, Iran, the Congo, Vietnam, Indonesia, Laos." Think of it: the landing of American troops in the Dominican Republic in 1965 had nothing whatever to do with Fidel Castro or fears of expanded Soviet influence in the Caribbean, but rather was intended to prevent that tiny country—whose gross national product was then smaller than most of the poorest counties in the American South—from becoming economically independent of U.S. investors, markets, and suppliers!

This became, as well, an explanation for American involvement in Vietnam. For the expatriate South Korean academic Young Hum Kim, the struggle of the National Liberation Front in South Vietnam was intended "to consummate a basic social revolution—a *human-welfare revolution*—and to unify an *independent nation* of Vietnam." That, he concluded, "is the kind of revolution which the United States leadership is committed to thwart by war-making—under the guise of stopping 'external aggression' against, and protecting the 'freedom' of, 'the people of South Vietnam.' " In opposing that revolution, in Vietnam and elsewhere, the United States was simply setting itself against the struggles of the vast majority of humanity for a better life.

Though *Struggle Against History* obviously reflected the influence of an extensive Marxist literature on economics and world affairs, it departed from orthodox Communist thinking in at least one crucial respect: it did not claim that a social revolution in the developed West was the necessary condition for the amelioration of the ills of the underdeveloped world. While several of the contributors—particularly the volume's editor, Neal D. Houghton—did make pointed references to social injustice and racism at home, by and large they confined themselves to urging simply that the United States accept as a fact that outside its own borders, "history" was going in another direction. Our job was either to step aside and let it complete its task, or to lend a helping hand.

The contributors seemed convinced, moreover, that such a major shift in foreign policy was merely a matter of mental adjustment. In the penultimate chapter ("Can *Pax Americana* Succeed?"), the historian D.F. Fleming even provided a helpful list of suggestions, among them that we should accept the United Nations "at last, as our best hope of living in a tolerable world"; "cease our efforts to impose our will on Asia"; normalize relations with China; and widen "the détente with the Soviet Union, which meant so much to so many people." And Neal D. Houghton concluded, in ringing tones:

> We must direct our efforts *not* toward stopping the clock of history and *not* in any major degree "to shape history in our favor." Rather, our enlightened concern must be directed toward *adjusting to* and *living in* this great convulsive—and normal—course of history, as helpfully and constructively as we may.

By 1978—that is, a mere decade after *Struggle Against History* was published—most of its arguments had been accepted by the then-regnant administration in Washington. In the meantime, the United States had withdrawn from Vietnam and normalized relations with China, and the U.S. Congress had facilitated Marxist seizures of power in the former Portuguese colonies in southern Africa, as well as the success of a combined Soviet-Cuban military expedition in Ethiopia. At the same time, the United States was in the process of definitively withdrawing support for long-time clients in Central America and Iran. A new détente with the Soviet Union was in full flower.

Yet within another five years the braver new world which Heilbroner and his colleagues could so easily imagine in 1968 was nowhere to be found. Détente led not to a more peaceful Soviet Union, but to a massive program of rearmament, and to the invasion of Afghanistan and the imposition of martial law in Poland. Nor did clients departing the U.S. sphere of influence automatically enter the progressive kingdom of heaven. Iran descended into the dark night of Islamic fundamentalism and tribal war. Ethiopia, the most "revolutionary" of the new African regimes and the one which most consistently attempted to apply the most ruthless recipes for "modernization"—including the forced relocation of entire peasant populations—provoked a famine which in its scale and its ruthlessness can only be compared to the Cambodian holocaust. Nicaragua swerved from one dictatorship to another and much worse one, losing total economic viability in the process. Vietnam, liberating itself from American influence, expressed its newly indepen-

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dent role not by undertaking a "human-welfare revolution" but by invading and occupying its neighbors. Cuba was barely surviving on a Soviet pension, for which it was required to provide legions to fight Moscow's battles in more troubled regions of Africa.

Then, after still another five-year period—that is, by 1988—"history" had not only abandoned the progressive new forces but had unexpectedly veered in the direction of the anti-examples of *Struggle Against History*. South Korea and Taiwan were becoming major financial and industrial powers in their own right, and Japan (not even mentioned in the book) had become the dominant force in international financial markets. There was no more talk of a North Korean miracle, but in India and much of South Asia a green revolution had preempted the mass starvation which Heilbroner and his colleagues firmly predicted in 1968. Even the tiny Dominican Republic had surpassed Cuba in social, political, and economic well-being. More to the point, most of the major "socialist" economies were now in the process of rethinking their own development models: not merely China, Eastern Europe, and the Soviet Union, but even Vietnam, which in 1986 legalized private property and sought new foreign investment. Only Cuba and North Korea, hostages to cruel and implacable dictators, continued to defend the propositions advanced by Heilbroner, Houghton, and their colleagues.

Of course, the situation of many Third World countries—Egypt, Argentina, Pakistan, Brazil, Peru, the Philippines, not to mention most of sub-Saharan Africa—remained as dismal in 1988 as in 1968, if not, in some cases, more so. The cause, however, was a penchant for remaining permanently suspended between two diametrically opposed models of development. Such countries typically possessed a private sector just large enough to prevent them from losing economic viability altogether, but suffered from so much state intervention (combined with corruption, jobbery, and abuse of political patronage) as to make it impossible for the market to do its work and provide sufficient propulsion for a genuine economic takeoff.* Their only good fortune was to have escaped the worst by declining to take Joan Robinson's counsel to avoid all contact with the United States.

THE "struggle against history," then, has been won, somewhat surprisingly, by the wrong side. Have the surviving prophets admitted that they were mistaken? With the significant exception of Robert Heilbroner, who has proclaimed the death of socialism and the triumph of capitalism, they have not. Echoes of *Struggle Against History* continue to resound on the editorial pages of the prestige press, and in the "spin" which network journalists put on their reports. Meanwhile, the same flawed concepts, in the same flawed language, are being retailed by many in today's "development establishment" to describe the situation of the "poor" countries of the "South" as well as the continued historic culpability of the rich "North." And a new generation of doomsday theoreticians, propelled by similar political impulses and cultural drives, stands ready to launch other causes, from animal rights to a ban on atomic energy, each destined in its own way to retard the economic advancement of the world's poor. We are already hearing new apocalyptic predictions of the catastrophe awaiting us if these causes are not adopted forthwith.

Contemplating the carnage of the 60's and 70's, one can only hope that this time such claims will be met with a skepticism informed by the experience of the recent past.

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* In the case of Peru, see my article, "The Only Hope for Latin America," COMMENTARY, April 1989.

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For Paul Applebaum, Sincerely

A Story

Jennifer Moses

A WEEK after I moved from Boston to New York, I got a phone call from a friend of my mother's. She said her name was Mrs. Applebaum, and she wanted me to write a poem in honor of her son's bar mitzvah. "Paul is really such a great kid," she said, "I wish you knew him."

"Excuse me?" I said.

"Your mother told me about your poems," she said. "We had lunch, just yesterday. I was thinking along the lines of something funny, you know. Is a hundred dollars enough?"

Then I remembered that the year before I'd written a poem—a ballad with thudding iambics and clumsy end rhymes—in honor of my brother's wedding. I'd read it at the rehearsal dinner. Afterward, my mother had come up to me, given me a big kiss, and said, "You're so clever. I could *never* do that. If I were you, I'd advertise."

"Okay?" Mrs. Applebaum said. "Will a hundred do it?"

I needed the money. The rent on my new apartment was twice what I'd spent in Boston, and the job I'd found—as a proofreader in a downtown law firm—didn't pay a lot. The law firm had long, cool corridors laid with Persian rugs, and a cafeteria. The cafeteria intimidated me. The secretaries sat at one end, the lawyers at the other. The lawyers—some of whom were younger than I was—had a hard, well-defined, determined look that I'd always associated with a profound ability to succeed. They ignored me.

"Okay," I said.

"So?" my mother said when she called an hour later. "Did Judith Applebaum call you? I gave her your number."

"She called," I said.

"Well," my mother said, pleased. "So what's new?"

MY MOTHER didn't like the way I'd been conducting my life, and was happy that I'd decided to change it. Mainly she didn't like my boyfriend, Michael. She never had. "A very interesting young man," she said when she'd first met him. Two years later, after we'd broken up, she said, "That man ought to be horsewhipped for treating you the way he did."

I argued with her. I told her that what had happened was nobody's fault, and that at least he'd had the decency to be honest. "Honest!" she said. "Honey, if I were you, I'd tell him to take his honesty and shove it."

But I was still in love with Michael. That's why I left Boston. I knew I couldn't continue living in the same city as him. He had a silky voice and could recite all of Donne's sonnets by heart. I knew that if I stayed in Boston I'd sit around waiting for him to call me, or worse, that I'd start calling him and hanging up, or calling and begging.

Michael was a Ph.D. candidate in linguistics. He would get angry when people used clichés, except when they used them with intentional irony. He himself sometimes used them ironically, like when he pulled me to him in bed, saying—in a soft, teasing voice—"Snug as an ol' bug in an ol' rug." But if I said something like, "It's hot as hell out there," his leg would jiggle rhythmically, the muscles in the inner thigh clenching and unclenching. That's why I was so surprised when, after he told me he didn't love me any more, he said: "I don't deserve you, Lydia."

"Huh?" I said.

"I'm not worthy of you," he said, putting his hands, palms down like a faith healer, over my knuckles. "You're too good for me. You deserve something better."

We were sitting on the sofa. Light fell in from the window above, casting a kind of halo around his face. Michael was handsome, with blue eyes and beautiful skin, the kind of skin that's white in the winter and dotted with pale brown freckles in the summer. His kisses were long and sweet. We'd been living together for more than a year.

"I'm sorry," he said, "but that magical feeling is gone." He pressed his lips together.

"But I still love *you*," I wailed. It occurred to me that he'd rehearsed this confrontation, and I was queasy—equally sickened by the whiny weakness of my position and the sudden certainty that he was sleeping with a girl named Elen Culler. Elen was studying medical ethics. I'd met her once, at a party in Brookline. She was tall and

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thin, with over-large blue eyes and nearly invisible eyebrows. Whether it had been she who had dropped the usual double "l," or her parents, I'd never thought to ask.

My new apartment was all the way west on West 72nd Street, in a building that used to be a hotel. It had two rooms connected by a hallway, plus a bathroom and a kitchenette. I'd found it through a roommate-finding service. For fifty dollars, the service had given me two names.

"So much better to have a little company," my mother said.

My new roommate, Lane, needed someone to take the place of her old roommate, who'd gone to Los Angeles to try to break into the movies. The day I moved in, Lane said: "She was like, *really*, talented."

"Oh?" I said.

"You'll really like it here," she said, "You'll see."

I wasn't so sure. Lane had met me at the door wearing a metallic blue leotard and matching leggings, her streaked blonde hair tied on top of her head, forming a kind of ditzy-girl pony tail, like a fountain. "Aerobics," she explained. "Trying to lose the blubber." It took me a second, but then I realized that under the leotard she was very fat—her arms jiggled, her breasts bulged.

"I'm really trying hard this time," she said.

Her bedroom was elaborately decorated with white lacquered vaguely French-looking furniture, and frilly, girly-girl curtains. On top of the dresser were a dozen little boxes filled with things—bobby pins, broken necklaces. On the bedside table were old copies of *Glamour* and *Cosmopolitan*.

I didn't really want to move in with Lane—she was just too stupid, too common, and too fat. Michael, I knew, would detest her. But the other place was even worse. It was in the Village, and the bathtub was in the kitchen. The blonde, blurry-eyed girl who lived there asked me nothing about myself, but said, her voice a breathy whisper, that she couldn't tolerate the sight of meat. I really wanted to live in the Village, but in the end the girl was just too weird.

Other than Lane and a couple of people I'd gone to college with and never really liked, I knew no one in New York. Every day after work, I wandered slowly uptown, stretching out the time so I wouldn't have to come back to the apartment to find, once again, that no word had arrived from Michael. Around 60th Street, I'd start gazing into shop windows. The clothes were beautiful—they filled me with a yearning so intense that I had no name for it. When I thought about Michael, I saw him in the arms of Elen Culler.

A few days after the phone call from Mrs. Applebaum, a package arrived for me, UPS. It was small and square, professionally wrapped, with a typed label. "What is it?" Lane asked.

My heart beat faster. I hadn't ordered anything, and there was nothing on the package that indicated its origin. *Michael*, I thought. Then I thought about the hints he'd dropped that winter—how he'd once told me that he'd always thought engagement rings were bourgeois, but that an argument could be made for the symbolism of plain gold bands.

So I knew it wasn't an engagement ring, but I thought that maybe it was something else—earrings, a bottle of perfume. "Aren't you going to open it?" Lane said.

Inside was another box, this one with the name of a store I'd never heard of embossed on its silvery top. Inside it were business cards. "Lydia Cohen, Rhymesmythe," they said. There was no card.

"So you like them?" my mother asked when I called to thank her.

"They're swell," I said.

"I thought about having them say, 'Poet for hire,' but I changed my mind. I like 'rhymesmythe' better."

I told her that I did, too.

According to my mother, my problem was that I didn't stick up for myself. Ever since I was a little girl I let other people push me around. That was why I hadn't yet "found my niche" and why I'd let Michael treat me the way he did.

It was hard for me to explain to her that Michael wasn't like the boys she would have had me seeing—sweet, dull boys with good haircuts and brightly colored pullover sweaters, boys in law school or just starting out in their father's computer-leasing business, boys who danced poorly, insistently leading just off the beat. Michael was exciting: it was as if he inhabited another sphere, a place where everything was possible. He made me feel that all of Boston was a backdrop for our affair. And he wasn't mean until the very end, and then he was more cowardly than mean.

I simply wasn't like my mother. My mother was tough. When she was seven, a boy named Jimmy Meyers dared her to eat dog food. This she agreed to do, providing that Jimmy Meyers would eat an equal amount out of the same dish. My mother went first. She got down on all fours and ate almost the whole can. But when it was Jimmy's turn, he refused to do it and began to cry. My mother was so angry she bit him on the nose. She made him bleed. I never could have done that.

But until Michael told me that he no longer loved me, I thought my life was going to be—more or less—like hers. I looked a lot like her, always had, and had some of her mannerisms. I thought I'd get married and have children, and perhaps—as a concession to the times—get a master's degree in something and teach a course or two at a community college. While I was still in

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high school, my mother and I had planned it all out, down to the wedding. I was going to wear her dress, and walk down the aisle carrying a bouquet of red roses.

SINCE Mrs. Applebaum's call, I'd made two or three attempts to write the bar-mitzvah poem, but nothing had come out. I figured I'd knock it out when the time came. Then, in late July—about ten days before her son's bar-mitzvah date and more than a month after her first call—she called again.

"Lydia, oh good, you're home," she said.

"Hello, Mrs. Applebaum," I said.

"How's the poem coming?" she asked. I told her it was fine.

"I don't mean to bother you," she said, "but there were just a few more things I wanted to tell you, before you send me your completed poem. I mean, about *Paul*. As you know, of course, he's about to turn thirteen, so he's at that tricky, adolescent stage. But he's incredibly sweet—he helps me out in the house, does the dishes, that sort of thing. Not too many boys his age do that stuff without being nagged. And for a thirteen-year-old, he's pretty nice to his little sister, Jenny. I mean, they fight sometimes, but all kids do. To tell you the truth, he's not the world's greatest student, but his father and I think that he's just a late bloomer. His father was—didn't really take off until halfway through college, you know the type. But he does like geography. Last year he got an 'A.' And he's got lots of friends, boys and girls, but no girlfriend, at least not that I'm aware of, what he's told his dad is anybody's guess!"

I had taken out a pen, and was taking notes on the back of one of Lane's magazines. "Uh huh, uh huh," I kept saying. "Anything else?"

When she was done, she said "We're really looking forward to seeing your handiwork. Your mother's told me so much about how talented you are."

There was a silence, and then she told me that Paul had a Golden Retriever named Red. "He's the same age as Jenny," she said.

A FEW nights later, Lane knocked on my door and asked me if I'd like to go out for a drink with her and her friend, Laurie. I was lying on the bed, trying to think what I was going to write for Paul Applebaum.

"I can't," I said.

"Why not?" Lane said. Standing in the doorway, she looked fatter than she was: she looked truly mammoth, like a model for a fat-and-tall store.

"I'm supposed to be working," I told her, indicating, with a flap of my right hand, the air above my head.

"Jeez," Lane said. "Are you aware that you never go out?"

It was true. But I didn't have it in me to explain to her that I had no friends, that I had no idea what kind of work might suit me, and that my boyfriend had dumped me for a woman whose eyes were so weirdly large that her whole face looked like it was going to fall off. I'd never been much of a night owl anyway. Early on, Michael had told me that one reason he liked me was that I didn't need to be entertained by him. "Most women require this elaborate, outdated dance of the sexes," he'd explained, fingering the line of his chin, over *café au lait*. "You're different." I took it as a compliment, and slept with him soon afterward.

"I'm sorry," I said again. "But I can't. Really."

"Okay," Lane said. "But it's my birthday."

"Why didn't you tell me?" I asked.

She shrugged.

"Then you'll come?" she said as I got up off the bed. I felt sad, damp with a new misery that was just beginning to enfold me, but I told her I would. The whole idea of going out with Lane and her friend Laurie—a tacky Italian girl with a bad haircut whom I'd met once or twice before—depressed me. Lane smiled. "I'm going to reward myself," she said. "I think I lost some weight."

The closest thing I had to a going-out-for-a-drink outfit was jeans and a white silk shirt, stained slightly at the armpits, that I'd worn to work that day. Not that it mattered. Michael had liked me in his undershirts.

OUT we went to West 72nd Street. The air was soft, people hurried home. Waves of anxiety traveled up my spine and fanned out along my shoulders. I felt sick.

Every Sunday morning Lane's father called and asked her if she was sticking to her diet. He was a doctor in Cincinnati. Through her closed bedroom door, I could hear her telling him that she was trying. Then she'd ask him for money. It was this memory—of her voice wheedling and pleading—that ran through my mind.

"Here we are," Lane said, pushing open a glass door. Clusters of women ate at round wicker tables in the windows, and a stray lone man or two sat at the bar, not looking at anything. Things hadn't started up yet. "We'll get a drink here, and then move on," Laurie said. We sat down. Lane ordered an Old Fashioned, which surprised me, because except in the movies, I'd never known anyone to order one. Laurie ordered a glass of white wine. I ordered a beer. We sang "Happy Birthday" to Lane. Then we had a second round, paid, and left.

Before we'd set out, I'd told myself I'd have one beer and then go back to the apartment to work on Paul Applebaum's poem. But by the time we were at the second place, I'd fallen in love with my alcohol-enhanced despair. My head hurt and my palms were damp. The music was too loud. Michael and I used to drink wine in the bathtub.

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His face would swim toward me, his breathing was music.

Now I looked around and started crying. When Lane asked me what was wrong, I said: "I just broke up with my boyfriend." I told her how he had picked all these little fights—I hadn't folded the newspaper correctly, or bought the right kind of cereal at the store, or I listened to junky music on the radio—for months beforehand. "I want to go home," I said.

Lane put her arms around me. "I know," she said, "I know." She smelled like cigarettes and baby powder.

We had another round—this time I had Scotch. Then a man came up to me and asked me to dance. "I don't know," I said, but Lane pinched me and said: "Go on already."

It was a slow dance. I stood in the man's arms, my nose an inch from his tie—a paisley of pale yellows and sweet, delicate, infantile greens. When the song was over, the man put his arm around my waist and steered me toward the bar. By now I was drunk. I let him buy me a drink and run his hand up my leg. I thought about going home with him, but then I realized that I was thinking like someone in a soap opera. I excused myself and went outside. It was late. I hailed a taxi. A minute later, I was in front of my apartment building. The meter wasn't on. I asked the driver how much I owed him. "Nothing," he said.

"Nothing?"

"Get some rest," he said.

I ran inside.

I FELL asleep easily, but woke up an hour or two later, when I heard noises in the hall. I was still a little drunk, and got up to see what was the matter. Through the crack in my door I saw Lane and the man I had danced with at the bar. His shirt was open at the neck, and his beautiful paisley tie hung unknotted against his skin. A moment later they disappeared into her room.

Once before I'd come close to sleeping with someone I didn't know. It was in college, my second year. I'd gone with my best friend Susan to a party at B.U., where we'd been invited by her high-school boyfriend. There were over two hundred people there, and you couldn't hear what anyone said. Eventually we found ourselves in the hall, getting high, and somehow I got paired off with Susan's high-school boyfriend's roommate. His name was Ted. He had curly hair and very long eyelashes, and girls kept coming up to him and smiling.

"Let's go back to our place," Ted said. "And have some wine."

So the four of us got into Susan's car, and drove back. We sat around the makeshift living room, drinking, and then Susan said: "I'm too drunk to drive back home. Do you mind if we just crash here?"

There was a general presumption—it seems to me even now—that I was meant to go back to Ted's room to complete the evening. I was of two minds on the subject. He was attractive, but in a dumb way. On the other hand, I felt like a weirdo and wanted to be normal, which meant, I thought, that I should be having sex with someone.

"Okay," I said when he took my hand and led me to his bed. We made out. Then he began to take my shirt off. "Look," I said when he got to the last button, "I don't think so." I got up, fumbled around in the dark, and found Susan's car keys in her handbag. I then looked around for pen and paper, but didn't find any. I didn't know what to do: it didn't seem right to take her car without telling her. Finally I hit on the solution. On the bathroom mirror, I wrote in soap: "SUSAN I TOOK THE CAR." As I drove back across the Charles River and through the industrial end of Cambridge, the sky grew light.

I WOKE up with a headache, and went into the bathroom to find aspirin. Lane was standing over the sink, wearing a new dressing gown, dark blue. Her face was covered in cold cream. "You left without saying goodbye," she said.

"I'm sorry," I said.

"Sure you are," she said. She bent down to splash water on her face. The door to her bedroom was open, the bed unmade, clothes from the night before in a tangle on the floor.

"It was my birthday yesterday," she said a moment later. "And no one gave a shit. Nobody other than my father, that is. And you know what he said when he called? 'This year, you'll get down to 140,' he said. Can you believe that?" A tear slid out of her left eye, then veered off directly toward her ear, skidding across the impenetrable oil.

"I'm sorry," I said.

"Sure," she said, "Right."

"Happy birthday," I said.

When she was finished washing her face, she turned to me and said: "I'm not like you. I'm not thin. I'm just not like other people." Then she said that as soon as she had enough money, she was going to move to California. Her old roommate had a place in Studio City and had found a job with a video company. I wanted to ask her about the man from last night, but didn't.

AT WORK that day it was hard for me to concentrate. Although the aspirin had taken care of my headache, I was in a fog. I was proofing something called "Vertical Integration Through Merger in the Case of Horston, Inc." It would have been easy enough to go home early—after all, I was hired help, paid by the hour—but I liked the cool, impersonal cleanliness of the library, with its massive volumes and dustless shelves, and the thought of going back to the apartment with its two bedrooms and cramped kitchenette filled me with dread. The more I thought about it, the more I longed to avoid it.

So I got a new legal pad and decided to write

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the bar-mitzvah poem. What had I written for my brother? *'Tis said that truth is stranger than fiction. . . .* Everyone had laughed.

As I began to write, I felt like I was in high school, doing something on the sly. I kept my arm crooked protectively over the top of the paper, in case some snoopy secretary saw what I was doing. But no one even came in.

Paul, today you've read from the Holy Torah
You know about Abraham, and Sodom and Gomorrah,
You've studied the mysterious ways of the Almighty,
and have learned that while He's stern, He's anything but flighty.

We're here today to wish you a hearty *mazel tov,*
and to say that we can see that you've been blessed from High Above,
With good sense, good brains, and a nature that's sweet and kind,
Thus it is that we know that what you seek, you shall find.

From the time you were a baby, you were sweet and strong,
even if with your sister Jenny, you didn't always get along,
It was dogs you liked, and soccer, and geography at school,
And during the summers, we could always find you in the pool.

Your best friend has always been your Retriever, Red,
Who sometimes likes to sleep with you, beside you on your bed,
And waits for you while you're at school, sitting in the sun,
Knowing that when you get home, it's time to have some fun.

When first we held you in our arms, we knew we had been blessed,
Even though since you came into our lives we haven't had much rest,
You are our own good son, and we love you dearly,
and so it is we're proud of you, and this we say sincerely.

You'll go on to make your own decisions, to become your own man,
And set your dreams to greatness: always know that you *can*
do what you set your mind to; make your dreams come true,
And always live your life with meaning, as a committed Jew.

I finished the poem around four o'clock and sent it through the firm's mailroom.

Later, when I got back to the apartment, Lane was in her room crying. There was a bunch of roses sitting in a vase on her dresser; the vase itself was tied with a big red bow. It was about seven o'clock, and the sky beyond her windows had turned that lovely glassy pink color that you get in northeastern cities when the pollution hovers in a certain way. The pink made the water towers and chimneys that surrounded her room look like giant jigsaw pieces, and all around, windows shimmered as if heated. Although night was coming on, the humidity still hovered over the city, and little shoots of steam issued up out of the pavement. I had walked all the way home from Wall Street, and my feet were covered with blisters.

"What is it?" I said, going into her room.

She stared at me. Her face was blotchy; her wet makeup glistened. "I'm twenty-seven years old and nobody's ever loved me," she said.

"Oh come on," I said, trying to make my voice sound soothing. Then I said, "Whoever sent you the flowers must love you."

She said nothing. I sat on the end of the bed, tired. The poem I had written for Paul Applebaum was pathetic. I didn't want Mrs. Applebaum's hundred dollars. At last, unable to restrain my curiosity, I said: "Are they from the guy? The guy last night?" For a moment or two, she stared at me, then she said: "They're not mine. They're for you."

"For me?" I said.

"From Michael."

She handed me the card. "Come back to me," it said.

And in my one last gesture of strength before I called him, bought a plane ticket, and flew to Boston—where I lived for years in a state of yearning unhappiness—I ripped up the card and told Lane to keep the flowers.

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An Address to the Class of 1994

Donald Kagan

Ladies and gentlemen of the Class of 1994, parents, and friends, greetings and welcome to Yale. To a greater degree than ever before this class is made up of a sampling, not of Connecticut, not of New England, not even of North America, but of all the continents of the world. As I stood a year ago greeting the Class of 1993, I was thrilled by how much Yale (and America) has been enriched in the three centuries since its foundation by the presence and the contribution of the many racial and ethnic groups rarely if ever represented in its early years. The greater diversity among our faculty and student body, as in the American people at large, is a source of strength and it should be a source of pride, as well.

But ethnic and racial diversity is not without its problems. Few governments and societies have been able to combine diversity with internal peace, harmony, freedom, and the unity required to achieve these goals. Perhaps the greatest success in ancient times was achieved by the Roman empire, which absorbed a wide variety of peoples under a single government, generally tolerated cultural diversity, and gradually granted to all Roman citizenship, the rule of law, and equality before the law. But the Romans imposed their rule over independent nations by force and maintained peace and order by its threat. From the nations whose cultures they tolerated they did not create a single people; they did not and could not rely on the voluntary and enthusiastic participation in government and society of a unified population, as a modern democratic republic must.

From the Middle Ages until its collapse in 1918, the Hapsburg empire did a remarkable job of bringing a great variety of different ethnic groups into the mainstream of government and society, but it never succeeded in dissolving the distinct identities of the different groups, living together in separate communities, speaking their native languages, competing and quarreling with one another, and finally hostile to the dominant ethnic groups. The destruction of the Hapsburg empire and its dissolution into smaller units did not end ethnic dissension, which today threatens the survival of such successor states as Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia.

In our time, nationalism and ethnicity have emerged as immensely powerful forces, for good but also for evil. Optimistic hopes for a diminution of differences among peoples and for a movement toward the unity of all mankind have been dashed as national and ethnic hostilities have played a major part in bringing on two terrible world wars. Even today they threaten to tear the Soviet Union apart and represent a menace to peace both in Europe and in Africa. They have brought interethnic slaughter to Nigeria and all but destroyed the beautiful land of Lebanon.

From its origins the United States of America has faced a new challenge and opportunity. Its early settlers from the old world were somewhat diverse but had much in common. Most were British, spoke English, and practiced some form of Protestant Christianity. Before long, however, people of many different ethnic, religious, and national origins arrived with different cultural traditions, speaking various languages. Except for the slaves brought from Africa, most came voluntarily, in families and as individuals, usually eager to satisfy desires that could not be met in their former homelands. They swiftly became citizens and, within a generation or so, Americans. In our own time, finally, after too long a delay, African-Americans also have achieved freedom, equality before the law, and full citizenship. People of different origins live side by side, often in ethnic communities, but never in enclaves separated from other such enclaves. Although some inherit greater advantages than others, all are equal before the law, which does not recognize ethnic or other groups but only individuals. Each person is free to maintain old cultural practices, to abandon them for ones found outside his ethnic group, or to create some mixture or combination of them.

Our country is not a nation like most others. "Nation" comes from the Latin word for birth: a nation is a group of people of common ancestry, a breed. Chinese, Frenchmen, and Swedes feel a bond that ties them to their compatriots as to a greatly extended family and provides the unity and commitment they need. But Americans do not share a common ancestry and a common blood. They and their forebears come from every corner of the earth. What they have in common and what brings them together is a system of laws and beliefs that shaped the establishment of the country, a system developed within the context of Western civilization. It should be obvious, then, that all Americans need to learn about that civilization if we are to understand our country's origins, and share in its heritage, purposes, and character.

At present, however, the study of

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Western civilization in our schools and colleges is under heavy attack. We are told that we should not give a privileged place in the curriculum to the great works of its history and literature. At the extremes of this onslaught the civilization itself, and therefore its study, is attacked for its history of slavery, imperialism, racial prejudice, addiction to war, its exclusion of women and people not of the white race from its rights and privileges. Some criticize the study of Western civilization as narrow, limiting, arrogant, and discriminatory, asserting that it has little or no value for those of different cultural origins. Others concede the value of the Western heritage but regard it as only one among many, all of which have equal claim to our attention.

These attacks are unsound. It is both right and necessary to place Western civilization and the culture to which it has given rise at the center of our studies, and we fail to do so at the peril of our students, our country, and of the hopes for a democratic, liberal society emerging throughout the world today.

In response to those who claim that Western culture is relevant only to a limited group it is enough to quote W.E.B. Du Bois, the African-American intellectual and political leader, writing at the turn of the century in a Jim Crow America:

> I sit with Shakespeare and he winces not. Across the color line I walk arm in arm with Balzac and Dumas, where smiling men and welcoming women glide in gilded halls. From out of the caves of evening that swing between the strong-limbed earth and the tracery of the stars, I summon Aristotle and Aurelius and what soul I will, and they come all graciously with no scorn or condescension. So, wed with Truth, I dwell above the veil.

For Du Bois the wisdom of the West's great writers was valuable for all, and he would not allow himself or others to be deprived of it because of the accident of race. Such was and is the view of the millions of people of both genders and every ethnic group who have personally experienced the value and significance of the Western heritage.

THE assault on the character of Western civilization badly distorts history. The West's flaws are real enough, but they are common to almost all the civilizations known on any continent at any time in human history. What is remarkable about the Western heritage and what makes it essential are the important ways in which it has departed from the common experience. More than any other it has asserted the claims of the individual against those of the state, limiting the state's power and creating a realm of privacy into which it cannot penetrate. By means of the philosophical, scientific, agricultural, and industrial revolutions that have taken place in the West, human beings have been able to produce and multiply the things needed for life so as to make survival and prosperity possible for ever-increasing numbers, without rapacious wars and at a level that permits dignity and independence.

Western civilization is the champion of representative democracy as the normal way for human beings to govern themselves, in place of the different varieties of monarchy, oligarchy, and tyranny that have ruled most of the human race throughout history and rule most of the world today. It has produced the theory and practice of the separation of church and state, thereby protecting each from the other and creating a free and safe place for individual conscience. At its core is a tolerance and respect for diversity unknown in most cultures. One of its most telling characteristics is its encouragement of criticism of itself and its ways. Only in the West can one imagine a movement to neglect the culture's own heritage in favor of some other. The university itself, a specially sheltered place for such self-examination, is a Western phenomenon, only partially assimilated by other cultures.

My claim is that most of the sins and errors of Western civilization are those of the human race. Its special achievements and values, however, are gifts to all humanity and are widely seen as such around the world today, although their authorship is rarely acknowledged. People everywhere envy not only its science and technology but also its freedom and popular government and the institutions that make them possible. The roots of these things are to be found uniquely in the experience and ideas of the West.

In short, Western culture and institutions are the most powerful paradigm in the world today. As they increasingly become the objects of emulation by peoples everywhere, their study becomes essential for those of all nations. How odd that Americans should choose this moment to declare Western civilization irrelevant, unnecessary, and even vicious.

THERE is, in fact, great need to make the Western heritage the central and common study in American schools, colleges, and universities today. Happily, student bodies have grown vastly more diverse. Less happily, students are seeing themselves increasingly as parts of groups, distinct from other groups. They often feel pressure to communicate mainly with others like themselves within the group and to pursue intellectual interests that are of particular importance to it. The result that threatens is a series of discrete experiences in college, isolated from one another, segregated, and partial. But a liberal education needs to create a challenge to the ideas, habits, and attitudes that students bring with them, so that their vision may be broadened, their knowledge expanded, their understanding deepened. That challenge must come from studies that are unfamiliar, sometimes uncomfortably so, and from a wide variety of fellow students from many different backgrounds, holding different opinions, expressing them freely to one another, and exploring them together.

If the students are to educate one another in this way, some part of their studies must be in common, and their natural subject is the experience of which our country is the heir and of which it remains an important part. There is, after all, a common culture in our society, itself various, changing, rich with the contributions of Americans who come or whose ancestors came from every continent in the

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world, yet recognizably and unmistakably American. At this moment in history an objective observer would have to say that American culture derives chiefly from the experience of Western civilization, and especially from England, whose language and institutions are the most copious springs from which it draws its life. I say this without embarrassment, as an immigrant who arrived here as an infant from Lithuania, a tiny country on the fringe of the West, without any connection with the Anglo-Saxon founders of the United States. Our students will be handicapped in their lives after college if they do not have a broad and deep knowledge of the culture in which they live and the roots from which it comes.

There are implications, too, for our public life. Constitutional government and democracy are not natural blessings; they are far from common in the world today, and they have been terribly rare in the history of the human race. They are the product of some peculiar developments in the history of Western civilization, and they, too, need to be thoroughly understood by all our citizens if our way of governing ourselves is to continue and flourish. We must all understand how it works, how it came to be, and how hard it is to sustain.

Our country was invented and has grown strong by achieving unity out of diversity while respecting the importance and integrity of the many elements that make it up. The founders chose as a slogan *e pluribus unum*, which provided a continuing and respected place for the plurality of the various groups that made up the country, but which also emphasized the unity that was essential for the nation's well-being. During the revolution that brought us independence, Benjamin Franklin addressed his colleagues, different from one another in so many ways, yet dependent on one another for survival and success, using a serious pun to make his point. He told them that they must all hang together or assuredly they would all hang separately. That warning still has meaning for Americans today. As our land becomes ever more diverse, the danger of separation, segregation by ethnic group, mutual suspicion, and hostility increases and with it the danger to the national unity which, ironically, is essential to the qualities that attracted its many peoples to this country. Our colleges and universities have a great responsibility to communicate and affirm the value of our common heritage, even as they question it and continue to broaden it with rich new elements.

Ladies and gentlemen of the Class of 1994, you, too, have important responsibilities. Take pride in your families and in the culture they and your forebears have brought to our shores. Learn as much as you can about that culture and share it with all of us. Learn as much as you can of what the particular cultures of others have to offer. But most important, do not fail to learn the great traditions that are the special gifts of that Western civilization which is the main foundation of our university and our country. Do not let our separate heritages draw us apart and build walls between us, but use them to enrich the whole. In that way they may join with our common heritage to teach us, to bring us together as friends, to unite us into a single people seeking common goals, to make a reality of the ideal inherent in the motto *e pluribus unum*.

Quayle So Far

David Brock

It all began following the nomination of Dan Quayle as George Bush's running mate at the 1988 GOP convention. In the initial rivulet of news stories it was clear that no one, least of all the national media, had much of a clue about Quayle, except that he was a young, good-looking, and inexperienced "Reagan conservative." That he was unknown was itself the most newsworthy element in his selection. However, within two days, the Indianapolis *News*—ironically enough, part of the media holdings of Quayle's family—broke the story that in 1969, the then-draft-aged Quayle had decided belatedly to attend law school and had won a much-coveted spot in the Indiana National Guard that exempted him from possible combat in Vietnam. Moreover, Quayle had attempted to use his family connections to secure both the National Guard slot and admission to Indiana University's law school.

When the East Coast press picked up the story, it was framed as a ghastly scandal. The salient charge was hypocrisy: service in the National Guard, which lessened the wartime risk to Quayle's life and career, sat ludicrously at odds

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(it was said) both with his support at the time for the American effort in Vietnam and with his subsequent legislative record in favor of a strong national defense. In what was to become a pattern, ABC's Jacqueline Adams reported that Quayle's later "pro-defense rhetoric was almost comical."

A secondary theme in the Guard story had to do with the intervention of Quayle's family friends on his behalf. This dovetailed nicely with the then-nascent perception of Quayle as an undistinguished and rather dimwitted playboy, gliding passively through a charmed life. That perception soon came to overshadow the Guard story *per se*, and still bedevils Quayle today. The charge was—and is—that he is intellectually not fit to serve.

The first glint of this line of criticism emerged in a profile of then-Senator Quayle in *The Almanac of American Politics*, which said he did "not seem particularly cerebral"; this reportedly was distributed at the GOP convention by some who opposed Quayle's selection for the vice-presidential slot. Soon thereafter came reports that his record in high school and college was mediocre at best, along with demeaning accounts of how he first came to seek public office. (In a conversation at a local golf club, Quayle was drafted to run for Congress in 1976 by a county GOP operative desperate to replace a contender who had dropped out of the race.) Finally, there was the allegation that Quayle's legislative career had been unremarkable.

With the fall campaign in full swing, the media mercilessly continued to portray Quayle as a dolt. The task was made easier by his increasingly apparent personal limitations. Quayle plainly was not the most accomplished nominee Bush could have designated (something that could be said of many a vice-presidential candidate in American history). Having been plucked from relative obscurity and tossed without preparation into the heat of an intense national campaign, he was from the outset an unsure and imprecise candidate. One recalls his arm-waving exuberance on the day his selection was announced, and his awkward initial attempts to defend his military record against scrutiny: "I did not know in 1969 that I would be in this room today, I'll confess." The ensuing notoriety only compounded these weaknesses, as Quayle stiffened further—to the point of actually appearing frightened—in the knowledge that the least misstep would launch a new round of derision.

IF ANYTHING, the level of opprobrium actually rose when the Bush-Quayle ticket was finally elected. The idea that Quayle was one heartbeat away from the presidency became a national joke. One week after the election, the *New Republic* asked, "Can journalists keep writing indefinitely that Dan Quayle is a moron just because he is one?" Senator John Kerry of Massachusetts said in a public speech that in the event of Bush's death, the Secret Service had orders to "shoot Quayle." Even some segments of the Right joined in: the *American Spectator* published a disparaging "Danny Quayle Reader" after Quayle remarked offhandedly that the monthly magazine was "hard to get through."

For his part, Quayle obliged his critics by issuing a steady stream of bloopers. Thus, he referred to the people of American Samoa as "happy campers"; he spoke of the Holocaust as "an obscene period in our [*sic*] nation's history"; and, most famously, he observed, "What a waste it is to lose one's mind." Yet as with Quayle's uneven campaign performance, it may be questioned whether these sorts of gaffes added up to either incompetence or stupidity as opposed to inexperience or inarticulateness. On balance, and considering things on their merits, it seems clear that Quayle paid a much higher price for his personal shortcomings than, say, did the Democratic vice-presidential candidate in 1988 Lloyd Bentsen for his $10,000-a-ticket breakfast club for fat-cat lobbyists, or the presidential candidate Michael Dukakis for his absurdly counterintuitive response in a televised debate to a question concerning the hypothetical rape of his wife. And it may also be questioned whether the two-term Congressman and second-term Senator Quayle was any less qualified to run for the vice presidency in 1988 than, for example, the two-term Congresswoman Geraldine Ferraro had been in 1984.

Hendrick Hertzberg, who covered the campaign for the *New Republic*, got closer to the real issue in an article entitled "Roboflop": "The question raised about the prospect of a President Quayle is the same as the question raised about the prospect of a President Bush and for that matter by the reality of President Reagan: how long can a great nation afford to have silly leaders?" This, from a man who wrote speeches for Jimmy Carter! Similarly, in a *Time* cover story last April, Garry Wills, after laying to rest several myths about the Vice President, suggested that the real problem with Quayle was not the degree of his intelligence or lack of same but rather his politics. "Not only was Quayle born after [World War II]—the first baby boomer so near the top—he is also the first man to have grown up entirely within the confines of the modern conservative movement." In other words, ideas that could conceivably be dismissed as antique when held by a man of Ronald Reagan's age were literally incredible in a forty-three-year-old. More than anything, perhaps, it was Bush's designation of a committed conservative as "the man of the future" that grated and still grates on his contemporaries in the American intelligentsia.

THAT Quayle was a conservative in the Reagan mold seems, indeed, to have been the only substantive (as opposed to merely personal) fact most journalists managed to learn about him. That is reason enough to be grateful to Richard J. Fenno of the University of Rochester, who in a book published last year* goes some way toward fleshing out Quayle's early political career. It turns out, for instance, that despite the popular image, Quayle's course was not that of an easy winner. To the contrary, he has always been cast in an underdog role, and has

* *The Making of Senator Dan Quayle*, Congressional Quarterly Inc., 180 pp., $19.95.

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thrived on it. In 1976, at age twenty-nine and without any electoral experience, Quayle challenged a sixteen-year incumbent in a race for the House of Representatives that no one, including his father James, who published the local family-owned newspaper, thought he could win. But Quayle did win, and then compounded the trick in 1980, forsaking his safe House seat to take on and defeat Senator Birch Bayh, an eighteen-year incumbent and liberal icon.

In both races, Fenno observes, Quayle was considered an "unlikely success" because by the "conventional standards of political science, he was not a quality challenger—[he was] without experience or recognition." In the 1980 race, after two terms in the House during which he seemed distracted and bored, Quayle was seen as "having to prove he's a heavyweight," and even after he had won, "Dan Quayle began his Senate service at ground zero in terms of [perceived] past achievement and without much compensatory future promise." As Fenno puts it, the press wanted to say, " 'Look what Indiana did, trading Birch Bayh for someone without a brain in his head.' " But, he goes on, "this wasn't true and they couldn't say it for long."

QUAYLE came to the Senate determined to make a name for himself as a consequential legislator. A chance assignment to the chairmanship of the manpower subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources put him in charge of the reauthorization of the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA), one of the most significant pieces of domestic legislation during the Reagan years. As Fenno describes it, Quayle adopted a consensus-building approach, persuading Senator Edward M. Kennedy to co-sponsor with him the 1982 Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), but without compromising on any important matter of principle. The resulting Quayle-Kennedy bill emphasized training over public employment and reduced the role of both federal and local governments in favor of private industry. Along the way, Quayle fought off several rearguard attempts by his committee chairman, Orrin Hatch, and the Reagan Labor department, to scuttle the initiative altogether.

Though Fenno's book concentrates on how Quayle maneuvered the contentious JTPA legislation through each stage of congressional approval, Fenno also notes that Quayle's reputation was enhanced by the leading position he took on arms-control issues from his seat on the Senate Armed Services Committee. In 1987, Quayle's initial opposition to the INF treaty with the Soviet Union forced the closing of some ominous loopholes in that document. Beyond this, Quayle chaired two special committees to reform the Senate committee system and the military-procurement process. "Each of these assignments could be read as a vote of confidence by the leaders inside the Senate," Fenno observes. By 1985, the editors of *Politics in America* were writing that Quayle was "one of the twelve most effective but underrated members of Congress," and the *National Journal*, calling Quayle a "Senate success story," chose him as one of three potential "future Senate leaders."

IN ADDITION to spending several months observing Quayle at work on Capitol Hill, Fenno also traveled with the Senator in his district and watched him campaign for reelection in 1986. In his six years in Washington Quayle had demonstrated a mastery of the arcane legislative procedures of the Senate, a talent for building coalitions across party lines, and a cleverness in playing off one part of the Reagan administration against another—all aspects of the "inside" tactical game in Washington. But on the campaign hustings he was not yet "a particularly articulate or persuasive or altogether powerful speaker."

This was true in 1986, and it still seems to be true today. After two years in which he has operated more skillfully in the corridors of power than any of his recent predecessors as Vice President, the question still remains open of whether Dan Quayle has what it takes to be President. Now that attention is turning to the 1992 national tickets, the press is already focusing on whether or not a "dump-Quayle" movement is incipient, and we are being treated to replays concerning Quayle's alleged mental incompetence. Once again, the press seems determined to overlook Quayle's substantive record in office in favor of personal caricature.

The conceit that conservatives are dimwitted rubes has, of course, long been a staple of the political Left. In 1988 it was applied not only to Quayle but to the Bush presidential campaign as a whole, which was said to have played to voters' ignorance through its "emotional" appeals to patriotism at the expense of "serious" issues like the federal deficit; more recent controversies over flag-burning and federal funding of the arts have been portrayed as pitting enlightened opinion against philistinism. Indeed, the whiff of cultural condescension has attended every Republican politician with a common touch for thirty years: Goldwater was loony, Nixon was crude, Ford slow, Reagan loony, crude, and slow.*

Yet despite Quayle's less than powerful performance on the campaign trail, the fact remains that he was reelected in 1986 with the largest margin for a senatorial candidate in Indiana history. When he was selected to run with Bush in 1988, the GOP ticket was fifteen points down, and it was confidently predicted that his presence on the ticket "could only help Dukakis." Yet Bush/Quayle ended up winning by eight points. This past summer, the Vice President proved a phenomenal fundraising attraction for Republican party candidates across the country. For all these reasons and more—I have not enumerated the many contributions he has made to the Bush administration as a serious and thoughtful pro-defense, pro-Israel conservative—it would be senseless at this stage to count Quayle out in 1992 or, indeed, 1996.

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* In his new book, *See How They Run: Electing the President in an Age of Mediocracy* (Knopf), Paul Taylor of the Washington *Post* writes with refreshing frankness that Quayle was culturally "unacceptable" to the media elite.

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Anatomy of Evil

THE HISTORY AND SOCIOLOGY OF GENOCIDE. By FRANK CHALK and KURT JONASSOHN. *Yale University Press. 461 pp. $50.00.*

Reviewed by STEVEN T. KATZ

IN 1944, in an effort to explain what was happening to the Jews of occupied Europe, a Polish refugee by the name of Raphael Lemkin invented the word "genocide." He defined it as:

> The destruction of a nation or of an ethnic group. . . . Generally speaking, genocide does not necessarily mean the immediate destruction of a nation, except when accomplished by mass killings of all members of a nation. It is intended rather to signify a coordinated plan of different actions aiming at the destruction of essential foundations of the life of national groups, with the aim of annihilating the groups themselves. . . .

Since Lemkin's time, and in light of the immense impact of the Holocaust on contemporary thought, the question of what is genocide, and to what historical instances the designation applies, has continued to attract significant attention. Now, in *The History and Sociology of Genocide*, Frank Chalk and Kurt Jonassohn have made another attempt to define the concept and explore its applicability to a broad range of historical materials stretching from ancient to modern times.

Part I, entitled "The Conceptual Framework," begins with a reasonable summary of the debates that have grown up since World War II. Having fairly reviewed the work of others, Chalk and Jonassohn then provide their own working definition, and it is a very good one. "Genocide," they write, "is a form of one-sided mass killing in which the state or other authority intends to destroy a group, as that group and membership in it are defined by the perpetrator." The authors correctly gloss this definition as follows:

> We start with a *form* of one-sided killing because we want to emphasize that there are many forms of mass killings and that we are proposing to deal with only one of them. We emphasize *one-sided* to indicate that we are dealing with cases in which there is no reciprocity; while the perpetrator intends to wipe out the victim group, the latter have no such plans. The term *mass killing* is meant to denote those cases in which all of the members of a group were labeled as victims, notwithstanding the fact that historically the extermination of 100 percent of a victim group is very rare. . . . We mean to exclude from consideration here those cases of mass killing, massacres, riots, and so forth that had a lesser aim, no matter how objectionable such cases are.

The value of this definition lies in the fact that it both recognizes the need to include intentionality—i.e., the intent of the murderer(s)—and that it discriminates between genocide and other forms of persecution, including ethnocide (cultural genocide) and mass murder. The authors appear to recognize that not all evil is genocide; this seeming sensitivity to *difference* is promising.

Alas, Part II betrays the promise. Here, in the main section of their study, Chalk and Jonassohn deal with individual case studies of putative genocide; but instead of applying the careful apparatus set out in Part I, they largely reproduce an undifferentiated list of collective tragedies. Their method, to use the term very loosely, amounts to giving a brief and usually somewhat incorrect summary of the circumstances under review and then attempting to support, through one or several selections from other scholars, the view that the event in question is an instance of genocide.

THE best way to indicate what is woefully wrong with this procedure is to examine a number of their cases. We may start where they do: "On Cases from Antiquity." Here we have a reasonably well-documented one, the conquest of Palestine in a series of invasions between 734-33 B.C.E. and 701 B.C.E., which makes us aware of the complexities of attributing genocidal purposes to conquerors like the Assyrians, the key malefactors in Chalk and Jonassohn's summary. The Northern Kingdom of the Jewish people disappeared and much of its population was removed, but we know that the Jews were not murdered en masse. The annals of Tiglath Pileser, Sargon II, and Sennacharib, along with the biblical testimony of II Kings, show a policy of massive deportation (in the name of empire maintenance and security), not a policy of total murder, a point reinforced by the researches of B. Oded (*Mass Deportations and Deportees in the Neo-Assyrian Empire*, 1979), apparently unknown to Chalk and Jonassohn.

Two other ancient cases cited by Chalk and Jonassohn are equally erroneous. Quoting Thucydides, they refer to the destruction of Melos by Athens in 478 B.C.E., but the selection they reproduce from *The Peloponnesian War* reports that in the devastating reprisal the Athenians carried out against the Melians *only* "the men of military age were put to death," while the women, children, and older men were sold into slavery. The case of Carthage is similarly misleading. After summarizing the views of other scholars, Chalk and Jonassohn give us a lengthy selection from B.H. Warmington's *Carthage* (1980) which, based on the original record of Scipio, tells us that 50,000 people were sold into slavery. Again an unhappy fate but, again, not genocide.

STEVEN T. KATZ *is professor of Jewish Studies at Cornell University. He is currently completing a three-volume work on the Holocaust and genocide to be published later this year.*

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Chalk and Jonassohn do even worse with the Middle Ages. Here they discuss the Albigensian Crusade in France, the destruction of the Order of the Knights Templars, and the witch craze.

The Albigensian Crusade, regularly referred to as a forerunner of the Nazi Holocaust, was in fact something very different. The Catholic Church did not seek to kill all or even most Albigensians, or Cathars, as these French believers in Manichean dualism were called. Rather, it sought the doctrinal repatriation of the heretics, even if by force. We see this first of all in the nearly century-long effort at "conversion" that preceded Pope Innocent III's eventual resort to violence in 1209. The massacre at Beziers, usually pointed to as evidence to the contrary, was an exception; the more usual pattern was what occurred at Carcassone, where the inhabitants were not harmed, and at Minerve and Montségur, where heretics were given a chance to abjure, and later at Avignon where, after a long siege through the summer of 1226, Louis XIII spared the city in return for an indemnity of 6,000 marks, the destruction of the city walls, and the taking of a few hostages. There simply was no genocide of Albigensians.

Chalk and Jonassohn's comments regarding the dark role of the Inquisition in the Albigensian episode are even more misleading. Rather than being a massively deadly instrument, the Inquisition took seriously the charge to return sinners to the Church. For example, Bernard Gui, the most notorious of the Inquisitors of the early 14th century, condemned to the stake only 40 of the 636 prisoners tried before him, and this rate (6.4 percent) is very high for the Inquisitional courts of the period. In Carcassone between 1250 and 1267, the Inquisition ordered only two death sentences, while in Languedoc, at the height of the heresy trials in May-July 1246, Bernard of Caux condemned to death none of the 207 offenders he tried. In Albi the pattern was similar: between 1286 and 1329 only 58 individuals were actually punished by the Inquisition, though the extant records indicate that the Inquisition knew of at least four times that number of Albigensians in the city. Not only were few people put to death, but the evidence suggests that 90 percent of Inquisitorial sentences involved only canonical penances.

The inclusion of the case of the Knights Templars is altogether bizarre, as the authors themselves seem to acknowledge in an appended note. As for the persecution represented by the witch craze, this provides a more challenging though finally irrelevant example. Here we are confronted with a contradiction. The authors allot a full 20 pages to the witch craze—almost exactly the same space devoted to Stalin and the gulag. Yet in their introductory remarks they tell the

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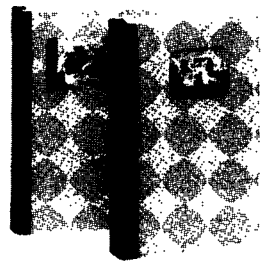

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reader: "We are not suggesting that the Great Witch-Hunt was a case of genocide." What, then, justifies its inclusion? "[It] is a precursor of the many 20th-century cases of ideological killing." But this is to get things largely backward.

First of all, while the witch craze did claim thousands of victims, approximately 85 percent of whom were women, the number of "witches" killed as a percentage of all women in Europe was (on my calculations) less than 1/32 of 1 percent—hardly genocide or, to use today's fashionable term, "gynocide." Secondly, Chalk and Jonassohn are wrong to emphasize (again) the role of the Inquisition and of ideology. For much of their evidence they concentrate on Scotland, where there was no Inquisition and where it was Protestants who killed "witches"; the same is true for Sweden and large parts of now-Lutheran Germany, three major centers of the craze.

As for the role of the Inquisition elsewhere, consider these facts: there was no mass murder of "witches" in Spain, the country most prominently connected with the Inquisition, exactly because the Inquisitors in Spain, rejecting the learned notion of *maleficia* as involving a pact with the devil, therefore also rejected thousands of witch accusations as the rantings of sick minds. Between 1550 and 1700 it is estimated that the Spanish Inquisition heard 4,000 witchcraft cases and condemned 11 people to death. Likewise, in Italy between 1500 and 1650, not a single person tried for witchcraft by the Venetian Inquisition was put to death. In France, a third great Catholic country, there was again limited witch-hunting. Lastly, in the Holy Roman Empire (Germany), the epicenter of the crisis, the conflagration was caused primarily by the Reformation and all it entailed, rather than by the Inquisition in some more narrow sense.

Chalk and Jonassohn highlight the ideological element in the witch craze, but what is particularly interesting is that Catholic doctrine severely *circumscribed* the extent of the craze. In contrast, what defines and distinguishes the ideological murder of the 20th century (itself far too vague a term), or at least the Holocaust, is that it is unmediated and unconstrained and recognizes no limits. In sum, the witch craze is misanthologized in *The History and Sociology of Genocide.*

We come now to more modern tragedies, beginning with the horrible devastation of the Native Americans in the 16th century. Here too the authors do no better. After speculating without real evidence about genocide in pre-conquest America, they jumble together demographic evidence with other factors relevant to the monumental decline in Indian population, and employ unsubstantiated and unlikely charges of "germ warfare." Yet as even they acknowledge, blind epidemic disease was the overwhelming cause of Indian deaths from 1492 to 1900 and beyond. Though the suffering and loss of life were nearly unbelievable, and though most Indians were cruelly overworked, and many were murdered, the notion of genocide is misplaced in this context.

Moreover, no government, starting with the Spanish and Portuguese, and including that of the United States after 1781, consciously set out to perpetrate genocide against the Indians. In the Spanish period, the logic of economic exploitation (plus missionary motives), and in the U.S. era the logic of reservations, both argue against any accusation of genocide.

The authors' treatment of the crucial case of the Armenians in World War I is both better and worse. It is worse because Chalk and Jonassohn do not appear fully to understand the event; they devote only one-and-a-half pages to their own summary of it, and almost half of that summary deals with the extraneous matter of Turkish denials of responsibility. It is better because it includes selections from the distinguished Armenian historian Richard G. Hovannisian and the political scientist Robert Melson. Even so, the issues are far more complex than these two selections indicate, and especially that of Melson, which is driven by the desire to draw strong comparisons between the Armenian massacres and the Holocaust.

As I read the Ottoman census data for 1914 and before, as well as the record of those who survived, I get a considerably different statistical picture of the casualty count and therefore of the event as a whole. Melson puts the number of casualties at around one million; I estimate approximately half that number. And this divergence, plus my deciphering of the implications of Turkish nationalism—the prime cause of the massacre—leads me to conclude that (a) the majority of Armenians were not massacred; and (b) while this was a brutal, horrific, violent crime, it was not technically an instance of genocide.

Here, however, I hasten to add two points. First, the case is *very* complex—too complex to deal with thoroughly in a review. Second, my disinclination to label the event as genocide does not entail any diminution of the moral enormity of the crime, or any endorsement of the efforts of Turkish authorities, and certain Turkish scholars, to downplay what occurred. But evil can be perpetrated in many forms without needing to be labeled "genocide." Unfortunately, just here, in this very hard and central case, where learned editorial guidance is required, Chalk and Jonassohn offer none.

All of the above problems apply to the case of the gulag as well. Here again the authors' one-page introduction is virtually useless as an aid to understanding Stalin's murderous thirty-year reign. Nor is it sufficient to recycle material from Robert Conquest and others, because, able as Conquest is, and undeniable though Stalin's crimes were—numerically, they transcend Hitler's—genocide is a matter not of numbers but of a very particular sort of crime.

The readings from Conquest and Anton Antonov-Ovseyenko concern the man-made famine in the Ukraine and the "war against the kulaks"; these are only inexactly, even improperly, described as genocide. Taking them in reverse or-

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der, consider that Stalin murdered only a minority (25-33 percent) of the kulaks, whereas he could have murdered them all if he had chosen to do so. Furthermore, the target of this violent assault was a "contingent," a "socially alien" identity, the nature of which by definition was subject to change. Whatever neurotic fears energized and accompanied Stalin's convulsive policy, fundamental to it was the kulaks' economic, i.e., class, loyalties, which according to the dominant Bolshevik consensus had to be broken down for the general good to prevail. The desired alteration in the kulaks' collective class consciousness, and correspondingly in their status as a "class enemy," was to come about through forced collectivization, not genocidal extermination.

Likewise, the appalling, vastly destructive famine in the Ukraine in 1930-33 has to be deciphered in terms of its nationalist dimensions. Both the indigenous Ukrainian population and the alien Soviet ruling class understood that the Ukraine was historically an independent entity with its own separate cultural traditions. The confrontation was thus between competing claims to sovereignty. For Stalin the ultimate objective was the full integration of the Ukraine into the larger, ideally homogenized, Soviet state. Anything less was dangerous, both practically and potentially.

Beginning with the purge of Ukrainian academics and political and cultural leaders in April 1929 and continuing into 1930, Stalin set in motion a movement that would eventually consume millions of Ukrainian lives. The object was the complete annihilation of Ukrainian nationalism—much like Hitler's strategy in, for example, Poland (and elsewhere in Eastern Europe). In both cases, the purpose was the maintenance of political control, and in both situations terror in its myriad forms was employed. But in neither was genocide the intention, for this would have been counterproductive. Destroying the controlling elite, leaving the victim people leaderless, anxious, vertiginous—these were the necessary conditions for achieving a lasting subordination. But destroying the subjugated masses themselves would have been absurd.

THIS brings us back to the kulaks. "Stalin seemed to have realized," Robert Conquest has recently written, "that only a mass terror throughout the body of the nation—that is, the peasantry—could reduce the nation to submission." As long as the Ukrainian kulak existed, nationalist sentiment would remain; to crush the latter one had to crush the former. The two-pronged method used to achieve this end was forced collectivization of the agricultural sector and a quota for grain exports which effectively translated into a man-made famine. The result was predictable, though I believe its magnitude caught even Stalin and his inner circle off-guard. Of a peasant population of upward of 25 million, it is estimated that 4-5 million died in this period from lack of food and related medical disabilities.

Overall, however, though the human carnage was immense, approaching the number of Jewish victims of the Holocaust during World War II, the proportion of the Ukrainian peasant population lost was somewhere in the region of 20 percent, plus or minus 5 percent, while the losses for the Ukrainian population as a whole were in the area of 15 percent.

These figures are slightly higher than the figures for population loss in those Eastern European countries overrun by the Nazis, and in neither case do they indicate that the conquering despot intended, or pursued, a policy of total population eradication, of physical genocide. Had he done so, the number and percentage of dead would have been far higher.

In sum, Stalin created a state that was guilty of mass murder but not a state that sought, or implemented, a policy of physical genocide. And I assert this conclusion with the terrible fate of the kulaks, the Ukrainians, and that of the deported minority peoples very much in mind.

ONE final modern case that should be noted is Cambodia/Kampuchea. Here the authors provide a nine-page summary and no secondary reading. While what they say is largely sound, they are once more hard-pressed.

Cambodia/Kampuchea represents an extraordinary event in which the leadership of a country murdered between 15 and 25 percent of its own people in the name of radical Marxist principles. The model state planned by the Khmer Rouge was to include no cities, no money, no classes. Achieving it entailed an assault on the traditional family unit, the uprooting of traditional social elements, the destruction of the ancestral religion of Buddhism, and a forced involvement of all in agriculture. In short, the new governing mandate sought to end all ties to the classical heritage of Cambodia and to replace them with a totally primitive social order.

The victims caught up in this bizarre, horrific, ideological slaughter, however, do not easily fit into the definition of a group, even a class. Though a disproportionate number came from the old Buddhist and prerevolutionary socioeconomic and political elites, in the end what finally occurred cut across all recognizable lines; it was a massive instance of national homicide. To call it genocide is thoroughly problematic—in particular according to Chalk and Jonassohn's own definition. Their discussion ends with a curious plea:

> The genocide in Cambodia represents an explosion of virulent ideologically motivated killing. The world cannot afford to ignore this form of genocide simply because most of its victims were not selected as members of racial, religious, or ethnic groups. The definition of genocide must be broad enough to encompass the case of the Khmer Rouge in Kampuchea.

But why? What is gained? Why will not the more accurate term of mass murder or national homicide do?

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We are back in a conceptual limbo, where issues of typological exactness are replaced by a desire to show human sympathy, understandable enough but logically destructive of the purpose at hand.

I WILL venture no further. Except for the Holocaust itself (the treatment of which deserves a mixed grade), the additional cases anthologized in this volume are all dubiously labeled genocide. The pity is that the subject dealt with by Chalk and Jonassohn is one of great seriousness and importance. Precision, learning, and the ability to make crucial distinctions are an absolute requisite if one is to transcend moralizing and ethnic parochialism and offer a real contribution to our understanding of both the past and the present. *The History and Sociology of Genocide*, though empowered by admirable intentions, falls very short of these criteria.

America & Israel

THE $36 BILLION BARGAIN: STRATEGY AND POLITICS IN U.S. ASSISTANCE TO ISRAEL. By A.F.K. ORGANSKI. *Columbia University Press. 315 pp. $30.00.*

Reviewed by DANIEL PIPES

WHY does the U.S. government provide such generous support to Israel? Conventional wisdom points to American Jews, their votes, their political donations, and their well-organized lobbying efforts. Whole books (notably Paul Findley's *They Dare to Speak Out* and Edward Tivnan's *The Lobby*) have been written to make this point.

A.F.K. Organski, professor of political science at the University of Michigan, comes to a different conclusion. Looking at the record of American aid to Israel, he observes a striking fact: U.S. aid was very low before 1970 and very high afterward. And noting that American Jews exerted about the same efforts on Israel's behalf before 1970 as after that date, he asks himself why the dramatically different aid levels? Logic holds that a constant factor cannot explain a variable event; obviously, then, Organski concludes, American Jews cannot be the decisive factor here. To clinch this argument, he points out that it was Richard Nixon, a politician singularly not beholden to Jews (according to Henry Kissinger, he "delighted in telling associates and visitors that the 'Jewish lobby' had no effect on him") who raised the levels of aid.

Organski posits a contrary argument for the turn in 1970. For him, the critical change had to do with American attitudes toward Israel's utility. From Harry Truman through Lyndon Johnson, he demonstrates, American administrations saw Israel as a weak country that could provide no help in the Great Game versus the Soviet Union; if anything, the Jewish state was perceived as a liability. But the 1967 Arab-Israeli war persuaded Nixon that Israeli military power was a significant benefit to the United States. This new view was then confirmed in the aftermath of the 1973 war.

As we know from his previous books, most notably *The Stages of Political Development*, Organski has a powerful and disciplined intelligence. In *The $36 Billion Bargain*, he relentlessly analyzes a large, amorphous body of data, and so goes far beyond the anecdotal montages that have served other authors as evidence. The result is a tour de force which actually settles a highly contentious issue. This rare accomplishment deserves to be rewarded by calling off the old and sterile debate over the Israel lobby.

About that debate, the book is full of insights. Organski shows how it is in almost everyone's interest to advance the myth of the Jewish lobby. Jewish leaders clearly benefit from being perceived as having a decisive impact. Israeli leaders like to believe that they have influential friends. American policy-makers exploit the Jewish lobby to explain away decisions that Arab leaders oppose. American opponents of aid love the lobby, for it strengthens their argument that close relations with Israel result from domestic considerations rather than from a sober assessment of foreign-policy interests. Even Arab leaders cling to the myth, which makes unpalatable decisions reached in Washington much easier for them to swallow.

BUT most of *The $36 Billion Bargain* is devoted to proving that the U.S.-Israel connection owes more to strategic considerations than to the activism of American Jews. The evidence includes a review of American public opinion about Israel, a comparative look at American foreign aid, and an assessment of the influence of the U.S. over Israel. A finely tabulated account of Senate votes reveals that ideology has much more to do with the way Senators vote than the size of their Jewish constituencies or the contributions they get from Jewish or pro-Jewish sources. And there is another, more perverse, impetus: aid to Israel provides the Congress with one of those few instances of foreign policy (the Afghan rebels were another) when it can take the initiative away from the executive branch: "It can demand that aid be increased, scolding bureaucrats and political appointees for dragging their feet, and, in so doing, claim the political credit for supporting Israel, while savoring the pleasure of driving the bureaucracy to distraction."

But why should a Congress usually so skeptical about foreign aid be so enthusiastic in the case of Israel? Organski does not quite explain the anomaly. He quotes a Senator to the effect that the Jews are "hardworking," but that hardly suffices.

The main reason for so much aid to Israel, as Tom Bethell points out in the July 1990 issue of the *American Spectator*, is that financial transfers have turned into the premier symbol of the U.S.-Israel partnership, and have thereby become an end in themselves. To argue

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DANIEL PIPES, *director of the Foreign Policy Research Institute in Philadelphia, published two books in 1990,* The Rushdie Affair *(Birch Lane Press) and* Greater Syria *(Oxford University Press).*

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against funds for Israel is seen as tantamount to being anti-Israel.

LOOKING to the future, Organski sees a weakening of U.S.-Israel ties if any of three conditions obtain: the Soviet threat declines; the threat of radicalism in the Middle East declines; or an Arab ally so modernizes that it becomes a tempting alternative to Israel as our main ally. Organski discounts the third possibility, and he is right, for other than Turkey there is no Muslim country in the Middle East on the track of true modernization, and the Turks stay as far away from Middle East imbroglios as they can.

What of the first two conditions? From the perspective of 1991, the threat to U.S. interests from Moscow is declining at about the same speed as that of the radical Arabs, personified by Saddam Hussein, is growing. This combination of trends accounts for the perplexing sight of an American Secretary of State pleading with Soviet leaders to send troops to the Persian Gulf. In other words, changes in the region cancel out changes in the world. While Israel is less useful vis-à-vis the Soviet Union, it is more so vis-à-vis the Arabs and Middle East oil, and its overall value to the United States remains fairly constant. If Organski is right about the key to U.S.-Israel relations lying in a hardheaded analysis of American interests, then changes ahead in that relationship should not be as major as many today expect.

On the other hand, the President and his aides need not always be hardheaded. It is entirely possible that they will make a mistake, either out of poor analysis or out of emotional pique. This seems to be exactly what the Bush administration is doing at present in its obsessive effort to maintain the fragile coalition against Saddam Hussein. Thus, if public opinion and shared values count for as little as Organski suggests, U.S.-Israel relations may be very much more volatile in the months ahead. Indeed, there is even a small chance that a working alliance nurtured over twenty years will be suddenly and lastingly damaged.

Class Struggle

THE IMPERIAL MIDDLE: WHY AMERICANS CAN'T THINK STRAIGHT ABOUT CLASS. By BENJAMIN DEMOTT. *Morrow. 264 pp. $18.95.*

Reviewed by RICHARD BROOKHISER

METAPHORS of empire have turned pale since the Persian Gulf became a scene of struggle over the real thing. But Benjamin DeMott, professor and cultural commentator, argues that the "imperial middle," which he has taken on in his book of the same name, is a force for real ill in American life, producing "a nation in shackles, its thought, character, and public policy locked in distortion and lies."

The "middle" is the middle class, and it is "imperial" because its norms and prejudices control the way Americans talk and think about their lives, and the way upper- and especially lower-class Americans are compelled, often against their own inclinations, to live them. Even worse than the middle's success in running America is its success in concealing the fact that it does so. The very notion of class, except as a label for consumer preferences, or as an adjunct to discussions of race, has been rendered unusable, so strong is the middle's grip on our minds and our vocabularies. *The Imperial Middle* is an attempt to awaken its readers' class senses. The truth is, DeMott argues, we are all different from each other; and this is the only truth that will set us free.

The style of *The Imperial Middle* is in a different league from standard sociologese. There is not a graph to be seen, and very little jargon. DeMott is good at describing states of mind which he deplores, such as the condition of *faux*-egalitarian bonhomie which he calls "the omni syndrome." It goes like this:

> As a sprightly citizen-democrat I'm not locked into my status but am at ease (in my fancy) with people differently situated. . . . "I was their pal," says Lee Iacocca, remembering his relations with "union guys" in his autobiography. "They embraced me," "I'm a biker," said Malcom Forbes.

When DeMott turns from mindsets to specific issues, however, he loses his grip. The instances of class injustice which he discusses in the greatest detail, and to the greatest effect, are the case of Mary Beth Whitehead, mother of "Baby M," and the Vietnam-era draft. Confronted with Mary Beth Whitehead, the media (which, for DeMott, is always the imperial middle's media) asked, in wonder and disdain, What kind of woman would enter into a contract to bear and sell her own child? Simple, DeMott answers: the kind of woman who had lived a non-middle-class life. Whitehead's mother, "a single parent with eight children who was erratically employed as a beautician, had called frequently on neighbors for extended help." Mary Beth

> and her husband often shared the burdens of friends incapacitated by accident or other emergency. . . . Her class experience, together with her own individual nature, made it natural [for her] to perceive the helping side of the surrogacy as primary. . . .

But the middle was unable to understand her experience, decided she was unnatural, and awarded her child to the professional couple which had paid her to have it.

The draft is supposed to be one of the egalitarian institutions of a democratic society, a summons you cannot buy your way out of. Yet during the Vietnam war, the boys of the middle, wise in the ways of bureaucracy, got deferments and exemptions, while lower-class kids, unskilled in such evasions, marched to boot camp, and to battle. One Congressman, DeMott writes, polling 100 random inductees from his district, "found that

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all belonged to families with incomes under $5,000," while a "Harvard *Crimson* editor learned—also by polling—that of the 1,200 members of the class of 1970, only two went to Vietnam."

DeMott's comments about Mrs. Whitehead are shrewd, and his analysis of the composition of the pre-volunteer army seems incontrovertible (and scandalous). But by focusing so narrowly on class, DeMott misses other factors at play. Surely the most startling thing about the "Baby M" case is not that women are willing to sell children, but that childless couples are willing to employ such means to get them. The phenomenon of surrogacy, as Maggie Gallagher has argued, represents a shift, wide-ranging and ominous, to a contract model of family life. Similarly, the great scandal of the Vietnam draft was not the failure of blue-collar boys to evade it, but the desire of so many suburbanites to do so. Middle- and upper-class Americans did not always consider military service so alien, as the careers of Ulysses S. Grant, Dwight D. Eisenhower, and the current occupant of the White House show.

DeMott's class blinders distort his political prescriptions as well. He acknowledges that the "myth of classlessness" encourages a "go-ahead, optimistic mentality," but he does not connect this in any way with America's economic performance. Instead, he regrets the lack of "genuine labor solidarity." American workers never developed it, partly, he says, because their 19th-century employers terrorized them, but also because they never had to struggle for the right to vote, or for material well-being. If it were not for this cunning strategy of oppression, two parts carrot, and only one part stick, American voting patterns might be "predictable, consistent, class-controlled, impersonal." We might enjoy, in other words, the class solidarity of Romanian miners.

ONE middle-class mind-set DeMott does not discuss is *nostalgie de la boue*, nostalgia for the mud. The "omni syndrome" is the conviction of a resident of Scarsdale that he can be "like" a sharecropper. *Nostalgie de la boue* is the same person's fantasy that the sharecropper leads a life that is vital, authentic, uninhibited. The reason DeMott does not discuss this mind-set is that he suffers from it. In his Acknowledgments, he expresses his admiration for *Seventeen*, a television documentary on lower-class youngsters in Muncie, Indiana, that was co-directed by his daughter Jo. "The high-school pupils in the movie swore a lot and smoked dope on film. . . . They weren't sweet to their teachers. . . . They often beer-partied with their own parents." PBS, for which Jo DeMott did the film, was appalled. DeMott, and the reviewers, were entranced.

Nostalgie de la boue is condescending and ultimately frivolous—an imperial attitude if ever there was one. It is also inaccurate. Do the children of lower-class Southern Baptists beer-party with their parents? Did the children of lace-curtain Irish Catholics? Plenty of lower-class people have middle-class attitudes, because that is the class they aspire to.

The Imperial Middle ultimately fails because what people think is as important as the class they belong to, and is not always deducible from it. People's thoughts and beliefs can change. There is more to social injustice, and to society, than is dreamed of in DeMott's philosophy.

The German Question

TWO STATES—ONE NATION? By GÜNTER GRASS. Translated by KRISHNA WINSTON with A.S. WENSINGER. *Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. 95 pp. $18.95.*

Reviewed by EDWARD NORDEN

HIS country's most famous writer, Günter Grass is nothing if not consistent. For decades, as this collection of essays, speeches, and interviews shows, he minimized, warned against, and poured scorn on the idea that the Germans

EDWARD NORDEN *reviewed George Will's* Men at Work *in our September 1990 issue.*

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—*Commentary*
201 pp., $10.95 paper

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ever could or should live in one nation-state again. "Reunification is a word devoid of meaning," he told the Bonn press club in 1967. Of course, as soon as the Wall came down, it was clear that reunification would follow. And indeed, this has come about even faster than its champions hoped for. But the events of the last year do not seem to have changed Grass's viewpoint at all.

THE author of *The Tin Drum* has always stressed two reasons why his countrymen, unlike any other ethnic-linguistic group in the world, must not elect one parliament. First, a united Germany was and is bound to be a menace. Grass put it this way in a speech to a Social Democratic party congress after the storming of the Wall: "No one in his right mind and cursed with memory can allow so much power to be concentrated in the center of Europe again." Second, a united Germany means the Federal Republic with its Deutschmarks swallowing the so-called Democratic Republic, which is a shame, since Grass believes East Germany had its own distinctive character and achievements well worth preserving.

To be sure, Grass characterizes the East German set-up in practice as a Prussian-Stalinist prison. Yet for him it was never just that, never beyond reforming and redeeming itself with a little help from its friends in the other, the free-market Germany belonging to NATO where Grass himself lived, wrote, voted, and agitated. A better, a truly democratic Democratic Republic was both desirable and possible. A self-reformed East Germany would have blazed a Third Way, Grass said, would have created a form of socialism with a human face which West Germans too could learn from and emulate. And his compatriots on this side of the Wall certainly had a lot of room for improvement.

He never gave high grades in anything to the state founded by Konrad Adenauer and the Western allies. Its constitution might be exemplary, but its conscience was too easy, its belly too swollen, its irredentist fantasies too slyly pandered to by Christian Democratic politicians, and there were altogether too many Nazis at large, of whom Kurt Kiesinger and Hans Globke were among the higher-placed. Grass's first, and best, novels implied all this. Having become famous, he plunged into West German politics. His writing naturally suffered. He beat the drum for the Social Democrats and their leader, Willy Brandt, a man who had actually deserted the Third Reich to become a Norwegian citizen.

Brandt's immaculate past appealed to Grass. Equally important, the ex-mayor of embattled West Berlin not only favored recognizing the East German state, but was for renouncing all claims to the Lost Lands east of the Oder-Neisse—i.e., Silesia, Pomerania, East Prussia, and Grass's native Danzig. This recognition and renunciation were the cornerstones of Brandt's *Ostpolitik*, a policy Grass energetically backed before and during Brandt's chancellorship. The goal was normality. If the policy had been carried out in full, it would have meant West Germany's making a separate peace with the Soviet satellite system, and explicitly granting the legitimacy and permanency of the state-behind-the-wall.

Ostpolitik was presumably *Realpolitik*. Neither Brandt nor Grass cared to be known as naive, or soft. Grass in a lecture in 1970, reprinted here, was categorical—West Germany would never go Communist, East Germany would never go capitalist, so why not face the facts and proceed from there? His preposterous, dangerous, real-life villains were always men like the publisher Axel Springer and the politician Franz-Josef Strauss, who insisted that the other Germany was illegitimate, and that if it were treated as such, it would eventually collapse. Neither Springer nor Strauss lived to witness it, but if anyone has been vindicated by what has happened, in the last year, they have been.

Grass will not admit it. Worse, he has not taken the opportunity to do a post-mortem, to analyze the origins and therefore the character and prospects of the defunct Democratic Republic. In fact, as is now blindingly obvious, it was little more than that part of Germany occupied by the Red Army in 1945 but not handed to the Poles. Its longevity depended on the readiness of the Soviets to bring their tanks into the streets of East Berlin. Someone like Grass, who wrote a play about the 1953 uprising in which he crucifies his fellow writer Bertolt Brecht for his slavish devotion to the Communist regime, should really have understood this. And he should understand that the Wall finally fell, not thanks to "the revolutionary will of the [East German] people," but because word got out that Mikhail Gorbachev, for his own reasons, had told East Germany's Communist boss Erich Honecker to forget about the tanks.

ONCE it no longer flowed from the muzzle of a T-72, East Germany passed into history with astonishing speed. Astonishing, and, for some West Germans like Grass, also with disappointing speed. For to the end, Grass wished the other Germany, brandishing its "new, nonviolent, revolutionary idealism," to be given every chance of survival. His sleek, fat part of Germany must provide a subsidy without insisting that the other part go to a market economy. He did not explain why West German capitalists and taxpayers would wish to bankroll a Third Way—especially when the East Germans themselves were fleeing west at an accelerated tempo through the holes in the Wall.

But if Grass is disappointed, it is not with the bankers of Frankfurt who insisted on their terms for aid. It is with his own party, which, after first resisting reunification as he urged, embraced the idea, believing it could profit at the ballot box. And he is disappointed with the erstwhile East Germans, who in their first genuine elections mostly preferred Mammon to idealism and voted Christian Democratic, trading their "painfully fought-for . . . identity" for annexation and a mess of hard currency. This disappointment is not less vivid for being implicit. As is the pathos, in

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retrospect, of Grass's call to the Social Democrats, only a year ago, to take credit for the fall of the Wall, to seize the future and "show the will to shape the course of political events." This is, in its misguided way, a brave book.

And one with a pedigree. There is, after all, the patriotic tradition of Lessing and Heine, of writers who fashioned an enlightened German culture while distrusting, if not actively disliking, their romantic, sentimental, brutal compatriots. Grass puts himself explicitly in this tradition. That is, he does not deny that the Germans constitute a single, self-conscious ethnic-linguistic group—on the contrary, he admits and asserts it. "The GDR," he wrote in 1984, "has not succeeded in creating its own national literature." But rather than necessitating a single state, this single culture ought to be enough for the Germans. "I believe," Grass explained in 1984, "that culture . . . can provide a sufficiently solid foundation for us to redefine the concept of the nation, down to the practical details."

He foundered on these "details." Were the two Germanys to be preserved by preserving the Wall? No, it was, for Grass, a "vile border." The two states would, instead, join in "confederation," each reserving enough sovereignty so that both could "fulfill [their] obligations to their respective alliances." This plea for the Warsaw Pact was delivered last year, in a "Short Speech by a Rootless Cosmopolitan." Twenty-three years ago Grass offered a different model: the Swiss, "an example of a confederation that does not preclude a sense of nationhood." Well, the Swiss speak four languages. And the Warsaw Pact died when the Wall did. Grass knows these things but cannot bring himself to agree that nothing but self-determination and a single nation-state were in the cards for his people the moment the postwar order dissolved.

Above all, if Grass wanted the Germans to form no more or less than a "cultural nation in confederative pluralism," it was because he distrusts them, fears them when they are united. He points out, correctly, that for most of their history the Germans have not lived in a single country, and that both times when they did they finished by bringing "grief" and "misfortune" down on their neighbors and themselves. "In a mere seventy-five years," he says, ". . . our unified state filled the history books of the world with suffering, ruin, defeat, millions of refugees, millions of dead, and a burden of crimes we will never be able to throw off." So the fact of Auschwitz cancels the German "right to self-determination granted to other peoples without hesitation."

Thus spoke Grass to university students in Frankfurt a year or so ago, and the fact that he could is another demonstration of West German democracy. Yet though he deserves respect for it, his reading of history is debatable. "We have every reason to fear ourselves as a unit," he told the students. Does this mean that when Germans are divided into several units, when they are separated from each other, they are to be feared less? Hitler made hay with the Versailles Treaty, which among other things accorded self-determination and political unity to all the peoples of Europe, except the poor Germans, A refugee at Oxford in 1939, the Czech liberal nationalist Eduard Beneš told his hosts, Churchillite dons all, that he and Thomas Masaryk had made a deadly mistake in 1919, when they got the Allies to include the Sudetenland and its Germans in Czechoslovakia.

"I fear a Germany simplified from two states into one," Grass said before the latest simplification. He hoped "our neighbors would put their foot down." They never even tried. But is it clear that a Germany somehow kept divided by the other Europeans, abnormally discriminated against and resentful about it, would be safer than the present colossus of 80 million? A question for academics and prophets. All an ordinary citizen of the world can do is mention some facts and hope for the best.

As a matter of fact, the present West German government of Kohl and Genscher, which moved heav-

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en and earth to speed reunification, has formally renounced the Lost Lands. It can reasonably be hoped that German colonization of Central and Eastern Europe will be benign this time. It can also be hoped that, in swallowing East Germany, the democratic, anti-militaristic West will smother the old, jobless secret police and the young, jobless neo-Nazis. Which is not to say that the Germans, now that they have been relieved of their chains and stigma, do not bear watching. They do, especially if times turn bad. Though history seems to have run over Grass like a train over a cartoon figure, only the years will tell whether this little book of his goes down as a curiosity or a cry in the wilderness.

Cherchez La France

FRAGILE GLORY: A PORTRAIT OF FRANCE AND THE FRENCH. By RICHARD BERNSTEIN. *Knopf. 349 pp. $24.95.*

Reviewed by ROGER KAPLAN

RICHARD BERNSTEIN, formerly the Paris bureau chief of the New York *Times,* where he is now national cultural correspondent, attempts in this book to get a fix on France. Why is that country, once so indispensable an element in what used to be called Western civilization, acquiescing in its own quite obvious decline? Why are the French, still perceived by others and by themselves as somehow unique, becoming indistinguishable from other denizens of an increasingly amorphous "West"? These are interesting and important questions, and in his diligent pursuit of them Bernstein turns up interesting and important insights.

Bernstein divides his book into three sections. The first treats of the putative opposition between Paris and "*la France profonde,*" a term for the French provincial countryside which the author renders as "the sticks." In the second section he goes in search of the French themselves, offering brief dissertations on their sense of identity; the way they drive; their attitudes toward foreigners, Jews, Arabs, and Americans; their sense of play and their sense of seriousness; the triumph of the French middle class (the bourgeoisie in its original version); the eclipse of the aristocracy, French taste, and the sense of *fraternité.* Finally, there is a section on the political elite and its peculiar ways of acceding to and staying in power.

It is this last section which is the most successful. Bernstein has observed closely a phenomenon that has struck all foreign visitors: the paradox of French democracy. Alone among free nations, France has developed a system which is at once extremely representative and yet, at crucial times, astonishingly unaccountable to the citizenry. At its most obvious, the system is exemplified by a presidential regime which simultaneously is plebiscitary and monarchical. Where else could a president, with no questions asked, decide on his own to spend years, and billions in taxpayer money, reshaping the capital city? Where else could a government, with no serious complaints from the press or the legislative branch (not to mention the judiciary), dispose of troublesome opponents by blowing them, literally, out of the water (as the French government did with the Greenpeace ship off New Zealand in 1985)?

Bernstein is interesting not only on the peculiar political culture but also on the historical and social factors that have made France this way; with admirable tact and sensitivity he shows that the almost universal acceptance in France of the principle of *raison d'état* does not amount to a subversion of French liberty, even if the French themselves are aware that the mentality behind their approach to government must yet evolve.

The same fairminded spirit informs Bernstein's treatment of his other topics as well. This is, as he says, a book "not written to prove any particular hypothesis," but which tries instead "to draw a somewhat interpretive portrait of [the French], hoping in the end some notion of what they are really like and how they got that way would emerge." The approach has its drawbacks, however, as well as its strengths. Thus, the chapter on French driving habits leaves one with the feeling that Bernstein is circling around a topic without quite locating it. He has a theory about those driving habits, but what does it explain? Only that "The French, like other people, are varied and various." Similarly, Bernstein makes a great deal of the difference between Paris and the provinces, yet in the end the difference seems to elude him. Paris, he allows, is as French as French can be: "It alone stands for Frenchness as we know it today." Then, when he visits the fast spots of the Alps and the Riviera, Bernstein discovers somewhat to his dismay that there is something Parisian about them. But the people who vacation in these kinds of resorts are, very often, Parisians. In fact, to put the matter in perspective, nearly one out of every six Frenchmen today is a Parisian (counting the region surrounding the capital), so what, in the end, can one expect?

A related shortcoming occurs when Bernstein touches on larger political matters. A theory developed in the mid-1980's that François Mitterrand, who had fought Charles de Gaulle as a threat to democracy and had opposed the constitution of the Fifth Republic, was turning out, in office, to be the most "Gaullist" of the general's successors. Bernstein accepts this view. It is not indefensible. On the other hand, so paradoxical a thesis does require some explanation, and it never comes. François Mitterrand may or may not have had the Gaullist virtue of creating a broad consensus around his own solutions to previously divisive issues, but, as a brilliant representative of the political class which the general despised, he merits, if one paradoxically intends to call him a Gaullist, deeper observation than Bernstein offers here.

Fragile Glory is an ambiguous title, and the questions Bernstein raises concerning identity and destiny are left, perhaps appropriately,

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in suspense. But they are good questions. The French government has itself recently put out a document on "the future of French identity," drafted by a committee headed by the historian Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie. The subject has been in the air for some time, at least since the late 70's, when it became increasingly impossible to avoid the issues of demographic mutation (declining birthrates, aging population, rising immigration), of European integration, of the blurring of political ideologies.

Bernstein shows how these questions have been transforming the French people's attitude toward themselves and their country and, gradually, the perception which the rest of the world has of them. He senses that, all things considered, the French are changing gracefully: becoming better allies, less obsessed with making it clear to everyone how gloriously different they are. At the same time, Bernstein knows well that the world will lose something if the French change too much. Concerning that eventuality he is, rightly, not overly worried.

Anti-Anti-Communism

THE CAUSE THAT FAILED: COMMUNISM IN AMERICAN POLITICAL LIFE. By GUENTER LEWY. *Oxford University Press. 359 pp. 24.95.*

Reviewed by SAM TANENHAUS

THE romance of Communism peaked in the 1930's, when there seemed legitimate reason to believe that democratic capitalism might not survive the Depression. It did survive, but so did the romance, through successive generations. More than a million Americans, at one time or another, enjoyed a fling with the Communist party, and even if, as of 1988, the total number of card-carrying (or -concealing) members did not exceed 20,000, it hardly mattered. For Communist objectives, says Guenter Lewy in *The Cause That Failed,* had already "become the goals of the more numerous and more influential free-floating Left," a domain that includes "churches and church-related social-action organizations" as well as "tenured professors and journalists." Not to mention the roomy class of literary intellectuals who are, as Lewy puts it, "especially vulnerable to the totalitarian temptation."

Old-time leftists tended to be idealists—rational, humane, often courageous, sometimes saintly. Many had formidable gifts. This makes their folly sad, strange—and complex, most of all during the first two decades of the American Communist movement (1919-39), when the likes of Edmund Wilson and Bertram D. Wolfe drank the elixir of social revolution. The story of these years has been handled deftly by Theodore Draper (*The Roots of American Communism,* 1957), Irving Howe and Lewis Coser (*The American Communist Party,* 1962), and Harvey Klehr (*The Heyday of American Communism,* 1984). Lewy is, if anything, too familiar with these books; his first chapters sag under an accumulation of borrowings and rehashings. It must also be said that he has no feel for the Old Left or for the seductions of Communism. The title of his study adverts to *The God That Failed,* the famous anthology of confessions by literary ex-Communists published in 1950, yet Lewy is indifferent to that book's testimonial spirit. He gives no inkling of just what the "cause" was—or was meant to be. Lewy is so appalled by Marxism-Leninism that he cannot help us see how others might be drawn to it.

So much for the weakness in Lewy's survey. More important is its strength, which emerges at about the 100-page mark, with the beginnings of the cold war and of born-again radicalism. One reads with a kind of marveling dread as pro-Sovietism creeps back into fashion in the United States—despite the Hiss case, despite Russia's invasion of Czechoslovakia and Hungary, despite Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin. Much of the blame accrues to Senator Joseph McCarthy, "a raven of disaster" (in Whittaker Chambers's phrase) whose scattershot style, with its frequent misses, put intelligent anti-Communists on the run and gave unwitting comfort to "anti-anti-Communists."

Anti-anti-Communism is, in fact, Lewy's true subject, and it brings out the best in him as a historian. He has examined an array of primary sources—newsletters, policy circulars, the minutes of clamorous board meetings—and from them has pieced together a picture of the American liberal community at odds with itself in the 1950's, under siege by the Left in the 60's and 70's, *in extremis* in the 80's.

The decline was catalyzed by Vietnam, more specifically by the antiwar movement, which began as an expression of orderly dissent but soon degenerated into street theater, less organized than orchestrated, and not always even that. A motley cast tumbled onstage: hippies and yippies alongside "grassroots" revolutionaries spottily educated in the dogma of Mao, of Castro, of Che Guevara. The mix included those, says Lewy, whose "contribution to the process of radicalization consisted in providing the movement with the vocabulary of Marxism-Leninism. The war in Vietnam, they argued, was not a mistake but the logical result of America's imperialist drive for world domination."

This was the polemical language of the old Popular Front, barely disguised, and liberal anti-Communists knew it. They remembered all too well the infiltrations of the 1930's, when apparatchiks had "bored from within" and turned labor unions, peace groups, literary congresses into front groups for the Communist party. It could happen again. One possible check was "exclusionism"—the practice of barring Communist-party members and sympathizers from the ranks of nonideological organizations. But the opponents of exclusionism argued—plausibly at first—that it was a mistake to draw conclusions about individuals on the basis of

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SAM TANENHAUS, *whose article, "What the Anti-Communists Knew," appeared in our July 1990 issue, is working on a biography of Whittaker Chambers.*

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their affiliations. A man might call himself a Communist but not bow to Soviet dictates. And what if he had a record of honorable service in, say, the civil-rights movement? Should he be barred because he was theoretically in fealty to the doctrine of Marxism-Leninism?

The exclusionists held their own until the debate became a free-for-all. In the antic 60's, exclusionism seemed a grim relic of the 50's; its proponents lost the initiative and then the fight, and organizations like the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and the National Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy (SANE) paid the price. By the early 1970's, Lewy writes, the ACLU "had not only repealed the exclusion of Communists from its governing organs and changed its stated position on the nature of the Communist party, but it had come to accept the services of individuals such as the radical lawyer William Kunstler, an avowed defender of violence."

So too with SANE. It had been formed in 1957 with the intention of lobbying for a halt to H-bomb testing. Its charter members wanted no truck with Communists. In 1963, Lewy writes, SANE's newsletter "criticized apologists for the Soviet Union who were 'passionately eager to picket the White House during the Cuba crisis, but who refused to picket the Soviet embassy although the crisis was triggered by the introduction of Soviet missiles into Cuba.' " Four years later, with the antiwar movement at full throttle, SANE's California board, says Lewy, was commandeered by "individuals and groups [who], while purporting to speak for peace, saw America as the single villain in Vietnam, charged that America was engaged in the deliberate and systematic extermination of colored people in a racist war, and found American actions indistinguishable from Nazi genocide."

The Old Left and the New Left had now found common cause and, Lewy argues, "this pattern of cooperation has continued to the present day." The present day: Lewy's study ends, for all practical purposes, in 1988, before Communist governments were swept from power in Eastern Europe. He squeezes in some judicious remarks about this development, but his emphasis is odd. He says too much about the ritual apologetics of America's tiny cadre of Kremlin loyalists and too little about the wider crisis of the Left, bankrupted at last by its investment in the "cause that failed."

At this moment the American romance with revolution survives in the *Gestalt* of "the free-floating Left" with its programmatic insistence that racism, sexism, imperialism, and materialism somehow originate in democratic capitalism and are perpetuated by normative bourgeois culture. This fresh assault awaits the attentions of a future scholar. May he be as scrupulous as Guenter Lewy.

We mourn the death of

Lucy S. Dawidowicz

1915-1990

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and a most beloved friend.

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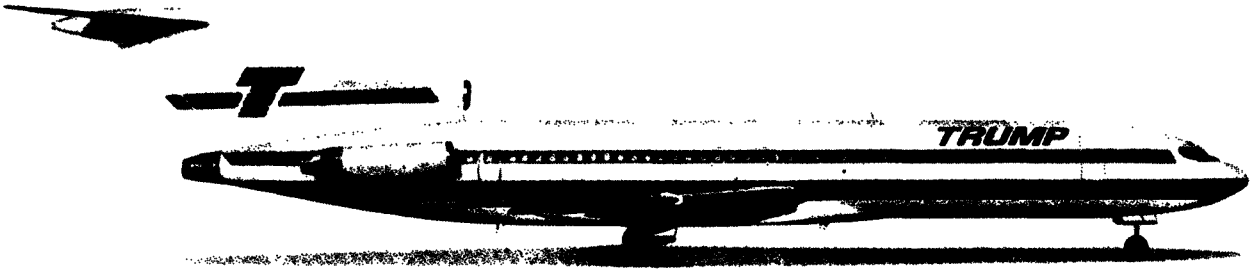

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